



The Sword & The Plow

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Preston-Simmons Debate

Where was Sin Defeated? The Cross or AD 70?

Third Affirmative

By Don Preston

The discerning readers of this debate are aware of what Kurt is consistently doing. He virtually ignores every argument that I make (he did say a few words this time, and I will refute his arguments below) but then demands that I respond to him. He ignores my questions and yet, asks questions of me, asking that I respond. Then, my friend says he is under no obligation to respond to *anything* I say! Wow!

Kurt signed his name to rules of conduct that specifically said: "Each man agrees that no material or arguments shall be presented that is not directly relevant to the affirmation or negation of his or the other man's position.

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Third Negative

By Kurt Simmons

Truth of Preterism, Falsity of Covenant Eschatology

In opening my third negative, let me state that, despite my disagreement with Don about "Covenant Eschatology," I remain fully convinced of the truth of Preterism. Preterism can be demonstrated by an abundance of proofs from both the scriptures and early church fathers. Origen (AD 185–254), the most learned and illustrious of the early fathers said:

We do not deny, then, that the purificatory fire and the destruction of the world took place in order that evil might be swept away, and all things be renewed; for we assert that we have learned these things from the sacred books of the prophets...

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(Don's Third Affirmative Cont'd from page 1)

Each man agrees to answer the other man's arguments directly, without obfuscation or evasion, to the full extent of their ability and knowledge."

Kurt, how can you claim that you have no obligation to respond to anything I say when you gave your word of honor to respond to my arguments and to answer my questions? Are you saying that you have no obligation to keep your word?

Kurt's Disparagement of the Use of Logic

It was stunning to see my friend use almost a full page of text to *denigrate the use of logic*. He ridiculed my use of syllogisms, but of course, he later tried (again he failed) to offer a syllogism to present his case! He tells us we should beware of the "if-then" (*modus tollens*) form of argument. Hmm, Jesus and Paul seemed to like that form of logic and think it effective! Yet, Kurt tells us that we need to be wary of anyone having to appeal to this form of argumentation.

My supposed misrepresentations of Kurt's positions

I made the statement that, "Kurt claims that Romans 11:26f predicts the salvation of individual Jews, via obedience to the gospel, throughout the entirety of the endless Christian age."

Kurt responds: "***I have never said any such thing!*** His claim is totally false."

Yet, Kurt proceeds to say: "Together, believing Jews and Gentiles constitute "true Israel."... "Are people still being grafted into the tree, saved and sanctified by the "Root of Jesse"? Of course they are! Will true Israel ever cease to exist? No, of course not. As long as time continues."

So, Kurt says that believing Jews and Gentiles constitute the salvation of all Israel— throughout the entirety of the Christian age.

Kurt, just how did you ***not*** say that the salvation of all Israel does not at least include *the conversion of Jews throughout the entirety of the endless Christian age*? While you did say, "all Israel" includes Gentiles, *you most assuredly did include believing Jews, didn't you!* Thus, I did not misrepresent your position. You do believe that Romans 11 speaks of the conversion of individuals (both Jew and Gentile) throughout the Christian age.

Kurt's position violates my argument on Romans 9, which Kurt dismissed, ***with no proof whatsoever***. Paul, speaking of the salvation of the remnant, which is what he is discussing in Romans 11, says *the Lord would make a short work of that salvific work*. That means that the salvation of Romans 11:25f cannot speak of the salvation of individuals (Jews or Gentiles) throughout the entirety of the endless Christian age. What did Kurt say in response?

Kurt says: "I agree with Don that the "short work" in Rom. 9:27-29 refers to national Israel. God gave the nation a 40 year grace period in which to obey the gospel, and then destroyed the nation for rejecting the Messiah and clinging to the law. However, I deny that Israel in Rom. 11:26 ("so all Israel shall be saved") refers to national Israel."

What is Kurt's *evidence* for changing the definition of Israel in 11:26 from the definition used consistently in Romans 9-11? ***He offers not a syllable of evidence***. So, my argument stands.

The Second "Misrepresentation": Entrance Into the MHP

I inadvertently misrepresented Kurt by saying that he says man could enter the MHP before AD 70, so I apologize for this. I evidently misunderstood what my friend was saying. However, my friend's position on this issue is still self contradictory.

He tells us that when the veil of the temple was rent while Jesus was on the cross, that this meant: "That the way was *now open* and the atonement COMPLETE (Matt. 27:51). (Matthew 27:51 says not a word about the atonement being complete, dkp). Kurt adds...

A.) "The Hebrew writer thus urges Christians to ENTER the presence of God within the Most Holy Place – before AD 70! (Heb. 10:19-22; cf. 6:19)."

B.) "The legal barrier separating men from God was totally removed in the cross."

C.) "I said the HEBREW WRITER URGES Christians to ENTER! "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus" (Heb. 10:19). BOLDNESS TO ENTER! It is not I, but the HEBREW WRITER who told the saints to enter in!."

Although Kurt is adamant that the saints **did not** in fact enter the MHP, I think the readers can see why I said what I did about Kurt believing that the saints *could* enter the MHP before AD 70.

Now, of course the Hebrews author urged the saints to enter! But when could they enter, my friend? If the Hebrews author urged them to enter, but they could not enter until AD 70 as you (and I!) affirm, *this is prima facie proof that Torah remained valid, that the atonement was not perfected until AD 70.* Christ had initiated the work of salvation, but would perfect it at his parousia. Kurt's claim that I know (but just won't admit) that the saints were objectively perfected before AD 70 is a mere debater's tactic. Kurt's own position that the saints could not actually enter the MHP until AD 70 is what proves that Christ had initiated the atonement, but did not perfect it at the cross.

The only thing, that prevented man from entering the MHP was *sin, and by extension, Torah because of its inability to forgive sin (Hebrews 9:6-10)*. Kurt cannot deny this. **So, Kurt, if the separating barrier– sin and Torah-- was "completely removed" what prevented them from entering until AD 70?** I have repeatedly challenged my friend to answer this question, but he has **adamantly refused**. Why? Because the correct answer destroys his rejection of Covenant Eschatology. His words about Christ "leading captivity captive" are moot in light of this!

Now, consider again Revelation 15:8– There could be no entrance into the MHP until God's wrath was completed on Jerusalem. So, please watch.

Kurt tells us that the destruction of Jerusalem had *nothing, whatsoever*, to do with man's spiritual justification. He says AD 70 had nothing to do with the passing of Torah and that Torah– which prevented man from entering the MHP due to its inability to forgive– was removed at the cross.

But consider Luke 16, a text Kurt appeals to for his Hadean doctrine. There was a great gulf between Abraham and the lost. There was also, undeniably, a separation between Abraham and the MHP. **Abraham and the righteous were not in heaven!** My friend agrees with this.

But, according to Kurt, at the cross, the atonement was perfected, the separating barrier was "completely removed." Abraham and the righteous must have entered heaven, right?

No. They still don't get to enter the MHP. "Why?," they ask. They are told that God must first destroy Jerusalem. They ask: "What does that have to do with us entering heaven?" "Nothing! The fall of Jerusalem is totally irrelevant to your entrance into heaven" they are told. "Then why can't we enter? **Why do we have to wait for God to judge Jerusalem if that has nothing to do with our entrance into heaven?**" they ask.

This is clearly an imaginary situation, but, it is based on my friend's current theological claims. So, Kurt, *we would truly and sincerely appreciate it* if you would answer that question. I think you owe it to the readers of this debate to candidly answer, without evasion, as you promised to do.

What was the relationship between the judgment of Jerusalem and entrance into the MHP, given the indisputable fact that **the only thing** that prevented man from entering the MHP was sin and Torah?

The combination of Hebrews 9 and Revelation 15 stands as an impenetrable wall against Kurt's rejection of Covenant Eschatology. He cannot explain why the saints could not enter the MHP until the supposedly irrelevant judgment of Jerusalem, although Hebrews 9 unequivocally posits entrance into the MHP at the end of that Old Covenant system. These are synchronous events, and Kurt's objections cannot overthrow these truths. Daniel 12 proves this

beyond dispute and we will examine that just below. But first...

I must insert this significant thought: Kurt says the removal of Torah had nothing to do with man's justification, that salvation is simply the application of grace: "Grace overcomes law! Paul places grace at the cross; the idea that the law had to be removed is totally foreign to Paul's soteriology (theology of salvation). The grace inherent in Christ's cross *triumphs* over sin and the law."

You simply must catch the power of what I am about to ask Kurt. You will want to eagerly anticipate his response.

Kurt winds up arguing **that removal of Torah was essential for man's justification after all!** He says, "Grace triumphs over Law." The Law was removed at the cross (KS). "The grace inherent in Christ's cross triumphs over sin and the law." Do you see what he has done? **He has affirmed that removal of Torah was essential for the entrance of Grace!**

Here is the key question: If the removal of Torah was irrelevant for the entrance of grace then **why did Christ die to remove Torah and apply grace?** My friend, you say that removal of Torah was irrelevant to salvation, so, **why did Christ have to die on the cross and take away Torah, for grace to triumph over Torah?** Furthermore...

Kurt incredibly says: "the idea that the law had to be removed is totally foreign to Paul's soteriology (theology of salvation)." This is patently false.

Torah was the ministration of death (2 Corinthians 3:6f). Did the deliverance from the ministration of death, to the ministration of life have *nothing* to do with Paul's soteriology?

Paul said Torah could not deliver from the law of sin and death (Romans 8:1-3). He said Christ does deliver from that law! Did the deliverance from the law of sin and death have nothing to do with forgiveness?

Torah could not give life or righteousness (Galatians 3:20-21). Did deliverance from that law, to

the covenant that gives life and righteousness have nothing to do with salvation?

Paul said those under Torah were under "the curse" (Galatians 2-3). Did deliverance from that curse have nothing to do with redemption?

There was no forgiveness under Torah. There would be forgiveness *when Torah ended at the time of reformation.* **Is forgiveness related to soteriology?**

There was no entrance into the MHP under Torah; there would be entrance into the MHP at the end of Torah, the time of reformation. **Is entrance into the MHP related to salvation?**

Hebrews 9 is Covenant Eschatology, anyway you want to look at it! Torah had to end in order for forgiveness, entrance into the MHP and life to become realities! End of Torah = Covenant Eschatology; End of Torah = Salvation! My affirmative is fully established. **Undeniably, deliverance from Torah had everything to do with salvation.** Now to Daniel 12.

At the close of my last, I posed the following: "What was "the power of the holy people" mentioned in Daniel 12:7? Please, do not ignore this. Clearly define Israel's power." In spite of my appeal, Kurt refused to answer. Why? It is because this single argument establishes *Covenant Eschatology*. So...

What was the power of the holy people? **Answer: *It was their covenant with God.*** There is no other answer! Israel's power was not their military, their temple, priesthood or sacrifices. All of those were symbols of their "power." So, follow my argument:

The power of the holy people (i.e. Old Covenant Israel), was her covenant with God, i.e. Torah. This is indisputable.

The power of the holy people (Israel's covenant with God) would be shattered at the time of the resurrection (Daniel 12:7). This is irrefutable.

The resurrection occurred in AD 70 (Kurt Simmons).

Therefore, Israel's covenant with God, i.e. Torah remained until the resurrection in AD 70.

Israel's *only power* was her covenant with God. That power of the holy people would endure until it was shattered. The power of the holy people was shattered *in AD 70, (not the cross)* when, as Kurt affirms, the resurrection occurred.

This argument proves irrefutably that Torah remained valid until AD 70. This is why Kurt refused to address it.

Kurt cites Delitzsch: "The temple service, though to continue it may be a few years longer in **outward splendour**, is only a bed of state, on which a **lifeless corpse** is lying."

So, Kurt says from the Cross until AD 70, the Torah was a "lifeless corpse." But, how could a *lifeless corpse* have any "power" to prevent entrance into the MHP? Paul said in Hebrews 9 that the negative power of Torah was such (in its failure to provide forgiveness) that as long as it stood, no one could enter the MHP! Kurt agrees that the saints could not enter the MHP until AD 70.

By the way, Hebrews 8:13 does not say, or imply that it was the *outward form* of the covenant that was ready to pass. Rather it says, "In that he says 'a new covenant,' He has made the first (the first *covenant*, DKP) obsolete. Now what is growing old (the first covenant, DKP) is ready to pass away." Hasn't a dead corpse already "passed away?" The contrast is not between *external forms* of the covenant versus the covenant. It was the Old Covenant that was growing old, it was *the Old Covenant* that was nigh unto passing. (Note that Kurt ignored my argument on Galatians 4). And remember that this has been, until very recently at least, Kurt's position. Commenting on Revelation 18:4 and the impending judgment of Jerusalem, he says– "The old and tattered mantel of Moses could not be patched with material from the garment of Christ; the Mosaic law was grown old; God would fold it up and it would be changed (future tense, dkp) (Hebrews 1:10-12; 8:13; 12:26-28)" (*Consummation*, p. 344).

Okay, so, if Torah no longer had any negative power to prevent entrance into the MHP, since it was a *dead*

corpse, Kurt, but if, as you say, the saints could not actually enter the MHP until AD 70, why could the saints not enter the MHP? **Paul said** it was Torah that prevented entrance. You say Torah was *now powerless* to prevent entrance. Yet, you say that the saints could still not enter the MHP! We need to know why! What "negative power" still prevented the saints from entering the MHP until AD 70? Will you answer?

Here is my argument, again, that Kurt has– and undoubtedly will again– ignored.

As long as Torah–the power of the holy people–stood binding, there could be no access to the MHP (Hebrews 9:6f).

There was no access to the MHP until AD 70– Kurt Simmons.

Therefore, Torah–the power of the holy people–stood binding until AD 70.

So, Daniel 12 is definitive proof that Torah remained valid until AD 70, the time of the resurrection. The time of the resurrection is when the saints could enter the MHP.

HEBREWS 9, TORAH, REMISSION OF SIN, HADES AND THE MOST HOLY PLACE

"And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance." (Hebrews 9:15).

I offered the following based on Hebrews 9– but of course, **Kurt ignored it:**

Christ died for the remission (redemption) of sins committed under Torah. *I affirm this!* The Cross was *for* redemption! It does not, however, say that redemption occurred at the Cross. Follow closely:

Those under the first covenant were dead Old Covenant saints that Jesus died to give forgiveness.

But, remember that Kurt wanted to affirm in this debate that the resurrection was *exclusively* the entrance of the souls in Hades into the MHP, i.e. *the dead Old Covenant saints!*

But, if the dead OT saints could not enter the MHP until AD 70, then it is undeniably true that they did not yet have the benefits of Christ's atonement applied to them. And Kurt himself has told us that this is the reason they could not enter the MHP. Is this true or false, Kurt? You have refused to answer this, but, you really, *really* need to answer it.

If, as my friend affirms, the atonement was perfected at the cross, then those dead OT saints should have entered the MHP at the moment of the Cross, or perhaps Christ's ascension when he "led captivity captive." But remember that Kurt wanted to affirm *in this debate* –that the dead saints could not enter the MHP until AD 70, **and this because the saints did not have the benefits of Christ's atoning blood until the resurrection– in AD 70.** And, he says this is still his view.

But, if the saints were objectively forgiven prior to AD 70, then the benefits of Christ's atonement were applied, and there was no reason to wait for the destruction of Jerusalem– an event totally unrelated to their forgiveness or the atonement in order to enter the MHP! Kurt has not breathed on this issue! Furthermore, I predict that he won't.

Kurt, do you now affirm that the dead saints received the full benefits of the atonement prior to the resurrection? Yes or No? Please, I ask that you honor the rules that you signed, to answer my questions directly, without evasion or obfuscation.

By still affirming that the saints could not enter the MHP prior to AD 70, Kurt is reaffirming that the saints did not have the benefits of Christ's atoning blood until the resurrection– *in AD 70!* **Thus, per Kurt's own admission, the "perfection" of the dead saints and by logical extension the living saints, as expressed in Hebrews 12, was proleptic (stated as a past fact, although still future).**

Hebrews 11:40 relates to this issue. According to Paul, the OT saints could not enter into the "better resurrection" (Hebrews 11:35f) without the NT

saints, and, the NT saints could not enter before the dead saints (1 Thessalonians 4:15f)! ***In other words, OT and NT saints would enter into the MHP at the same time!*** So, the proposition that Kurt wanted to affirm in this debate, that the dead saints would enter the MHP in AD 70, proves my proposition, and destroys Kurt's! **Of course, Kurt ignored this argument.**

Kurt says that AD 70 had no redemptive significance and the saints were forgiven from the cross onward. Yet, he says that the saints could enter the MHP until AD 70. But **he refuses to tell us why those "perfected" saints could not enter until the totally irrelevant AD 70 event.** Of course, Hebrews 9 answers the question-- Jesus was coming (in AD 70) to bring salvation. *He was coming to bring man into the MHP!* He was coming– Kurt now agreeing– to perfect the time of reformation.

THE TIME OF REFORMATION

My friend ignored the fact that he was in violation of the "Law of the Excluded Middle" in his flawed syllogism on the passing of Torah and the time of reformation. He amended that syllogism, but it still contained the same **anachronistic** fallacy. Let me restate the case.

As long as Torah remained valid, there could be no entrance into the MHP.

There was no entrance into the MHP until AD 70. Kurt agrees.

Therefore, Torah remained valid until AD 70.

Stated another way, if there was no access to the MHP, then Torah was still binding. Kurt agrees that there was no access to the MHP until AD 70. Therefore, Torah remained binding until AD 70.

Torah would remain valid until "the time of reformation" **when man could enter the MHP.**

Kurt argues– **and I agree**– that the time of reformation was **initiated at the cross, but perfected at the parousia.** He says: "When the gifts of the Spirit ceased, *the time of reformation was*

complete and not before." (My emp, dkp) Thank you, my friend, **that is precisely my point!** But this admission nullifies Kurt's claim that I "gave away the debate" when I said that *in and through the cross*, "grace triumphed over law." My argument was, and is, that Christ initiated the work of grace at the cross, and consummated it at the parousia. This is precisely what Kurt's argument demands!

If the time of reformation fully arrived at the cross then man should have been able to enter the MHP from the cross onward. Kurt argues that Torah was removed and grace fully applied there. Yet, Kurt admits that no one could enter the MHP until AD 70. And now he admits that the time of reformation was not completed until the charismata ended— in AD 70! This means that Christ had *initiated* the work of reformation, (grace!) the Spirit *continued* that work, and Christ *perfected* it at the parousia (Acts 3:23f- "The restoration of all things")! Just as I have taught consistently, entrance into the MHP— **at the end of Torah**— was at the time of reformation: "When the gifts of the Spirit ceased, the time of reformation was complete and not before."

Please, Catch the power of this: Kurt admits that there was no entrance into the MHP at the initiation of the reformation, i.e. at the cross. Entrance came only when the time of reformation— the work of grace— was complete, at the parousia. This is my view. This is Covenant Eschatology. And folks, this is not just "good argumentation," although it is *that!* This is logically inescapable, irrefutable fact.

So, man could only enter the MHP in AD 70 (KS), But, man could not enter the MHP while Torah remained valid. **Torah would remain valid until man could enter the MHP at the time of reformation.** Thus, Torah ended when the time of reformation was completed, and man could enter the MHP, in AD 70.

Kurt has surrendered his objection to the initiation of grace, salvation and covenant transition. He has unwittingly affirmed Covenant Eschatology. So, **once again:**

There could be no access to the MHP as long as Torah remained binding (Hebrews 9).

But, man could not enter the MHP until AD 70 (Kurt Simmons).

Therefore, Torah remained binding until AD 70.

I ask that the readers of this debate focus on this singular argument. Kurt cannot ignore it. Nor can he effectively negate it. My affirmative is established on this one argument, especially in conjunction with the argument above on Daniel 9 and the power of the holy people. **This is Covenant Eschatology confirmed.**

MY TRANSFIGURATION ARGUMENT

Kurt says my argument on the Transfiguration is my weakest argument. But, he denies the inspired text.

Kurt denies that the Transfiguration was a vision of Christ's second coming. What was his evidence? **He did not give us a word of exegesis** of 2 Peter 1, to justify his rejection of the Transfiguration as a vision of the parousia! **Not one word.** Perhaps its because he feels that proper exegesis of 2 Peter 1 is "a distraction at best"?

I must take note of this: In his vain attempt to negate my arguments on Isaiah 27 Kurt said repeatedly (even presenting me with another box!), that not one commentator applied Isaiah 27 to AD 70. Kurt should re-think this!

From the very beginning of Christian commentary, **the Transfiguration has been viewed as a vision of the parousia, based on 2 Peter 1! It is all but impossible to find an exception!**

I have been researching the Transfiguration for years now, and I can say with total confidence that this is unequivocally true. **So, my friend, "all the commentators" refute your claim that the Transfiguration was not a vision of the second coming.** The fact that Jesus, Moses and Elijah discussed Jesus' death does not negate this. You cannot use their discussion to deny Peter's words. My argument stands:

The Transfiguration was a vision of the Second Coming of Christ (2 Peter 1:16f).

But, the Transfiguration was a vision of the end of the Mosaic Covenant and the establishment of the New Covenant of Christ.

Therefore, the end of the Mosaic Covenant was at the Second Coming of Christ.

This argument alone is a total refutation of Kurt's position, for it posits the passing of Torah, not at the Cross, but at the parousia. He cannot dismiss it by refusing to properly exegete 2 Peter 1, or by simply calling it a weak argument.

ISAIAH 27

Some of my friend's statements are simply *staggering*. He says that this debate is "not about the proper exegesis of Isaiah 25-27. Issues of Isaiah 27:7-11 are a distraction at best."

So... In Romans 11 Paul discusses the taking away of Israel's sin at the coming of the Lord. In justification for his doctrine, he cites Isaiah 27:9f and Isaiah 59 as the source of his expectation. Yet, my friend says that "proper exegesis of Isaiah 27 (and Isaiah 59), "are a distraction at best."

So, according to Kurt, we need not be concerned with the proper exegesis of the verses that gave rise to Paul's doctrine of the salvation of Israel! If we do not need to be concerned with the proper exegesis of Isaiah 27 / 59, then we most assuredly don't need to be concerned with the proper exegesis of Romans 11:25-27. Kurt, it is your responsibility to **prove** that a proper exegesis of Isaiah is irrelevant and a distraction. Your claim is null and void without some **proof**, which you have utterly failed to produce.

Kurt's Objections to Isaiah 27

Kurt is probably hoping the reader will have forgotten what I had written about Isaiah 27 and 59 in my first affirmative, but, I have not forgotten. Kurt's objection to Isaiah 27 takes three forms:

1.) **Just because he says so**, Isaiah 27 is irrelevant to any discussion of Romans 11. This is specious.

2.) Isaiah 27 has no Messianic application, *whatsoever!* He says it refers *exclusively* to the Assyrian invasion of the 8th Century BC.

3.) Isaiah 27 cannot even be typological in meaning: Kurt asked: "What about typological significance? Could there be a double meaning so that the "purging of Jacob's iniquity" looks ahead typologically to AD 70 and redemptive salvation from sin? NOT A CHANCE!" (His emp.)

Of course, **just last year**, in his *Sword and Plow*, when objecting to my position on Romans 11 / Isaiah 27, Kurt said: "We do not disallow the possibility that there is a *plenior sensus* (*fuller meaning, DKP*), to Isaiah 26:21 that may look beyond its historical setting to Christ's second coming." Realizing the *fatal nature of this admission*, Kurt has now completely reversed himself.

So, **just last year** Kurt said that Isaiah 27 could apply to both the Cross and AD 70. But now, he denies that it speaks of either one! It is exclusively the Assyrian invasion! That is three, radically different positions on the same text, within a matter of months! No wonder my friend speaks disparagingly of logic and proper exegesis!

And now, Kurt desperately claims that I have not: "established ANY CONNECTION between Rom. 11:25-27 and Isa. 26. NONE! The same is true of Isaiah 59." This is *astounding*. **Just last September, (2009)** in the *Sword and Plow*, **Kurt wrote**: "In Romans 11:26, 27, Paul blends two passages from Isaiah together into one. He quotes Isa. 59: 20, 21, then follows up with Isa. 27:9."

Kurt, do you remember that? Of course, that admission is fatal to your new theology so you now claim there is no connection between Romans 11 and Isaiah 27 / 59. **But, what is your proof, my friend?** You have given none, because you can give none.

Also, Kurt just appealed to "all the commentators." But, Kurt, "**all the commentators**" *agree* that Paul cites Isaiah 27/59—**just as you admitted!** You have **no support** for rejecting the connection. **The only "evidence" you have is your preconceived, new theology that violates the text.**

Isaiah 59

Kurt says Isaiah 59 is not relevant to our study. What is his proof? **He offered none!**

I offered the following argument on Isaiah 59:

The coming of the Lord for the salvation of Israel in Romans 11:26-27 is the coming of the Lord predicted in Isaiah 59. Remember, last September, Kurt agreed that Paul quoted Isaiah 59.

But, the coming of the Lord predicted in Isaiah 59 is the coming of the Lord in judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood. This is irrefutable.

Therefore, the coming of the Lord in Romans 11:26-27 is the coming of the Lord in judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood. This is inescapable.

Isaiah 59 presents the identical hermeneutical challenge as Isaiah 26-27. Kurt must explain why Paul cites— **as Kurt admitted**-- two OT prophecies of the coming of Christ in judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood, when in fact, according to Kurt, those prophecies had no Messianic application whatsoever, and, Paul was not discussing *in any way* Christ's judgment coming. Kurt has not touched this problem, top, side or bottom. ***And, I predict he won't.*** Kurt's theological position has no explanation for Paul's use of Isaiah 27 and 59. And his denial of a connection is completely untenable.

THE POWER OF AN ABROGATED COVENANT

I feel confident that the readers of this exchange were stunned to discover from Kurt that provisions of a covenant are still binding after a covenant has been abrogated! Kurt's answer was nothing but smoke and obfuscation. Furthermore, Kurt knows full well that his claims would not stand up in a true court of law for even one moment!

Kurt, here is a challenge for you: Find some law on the books of American jurisprudence from, let's say, the early 60s, that provided prison time or severe financial penalties for violation.

Make sure, for the experiment sake, that the **courts have struck down and abrogated that law.**

Now, my friend, what we want you to do is find some one in violation of that nullified law, and have them arrested, tried, convicted and imprisoned for violation of that abrogated law! Then show us where that imprisonment stood up in appeals court.

My friend, you are a lawyer. Tell us what would happen if you or anyone else, did this? We will very eagerly await your answer, but, of course, you will not answer this candidly. You can't, for to answer this forthrightly, without obfuscation, is to surrender your new theology.

Kurt claimed: "Don, provisions of wrath recited in Leviticus are not proof the covenant is still valid when wrath is poured out." I had noted the following: "In his comments on Revelation 15:8, Kurt says: "The angels emerge from the tabernacle of the testimony with *the covenantal curses and plagues*" (*Consummation*, 292, my emphasis). As he comments on the judgment of Babylon he says: "The threefold judgments of death (pestilence) mourning, and famine were foretold by Moses: And I will bring a sword upon you, ***that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant***: and when ye are gathered within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you...(Leviticus 26:25, 26, 29-32)."

Now watch. *Leviticus says* that the punishments— the punishments described in Revelation that were about to come on Jerusalem in AD 70— would be God's "covenant quarrel" with Israel. The judgment actions would be "covenantal curses" (KS). Yet, according to Kurt, *none of this means Torah was still binding!* In other words, God was going to dredge up dead curses from the dead covenant (forty years dead!), and apply those dead covenant curses on Jerusalem!

Incredibly, Kurt argues: "If the latter (a king under covenant with another king, dkp) breaks the terms of the covenant, the former is certainly entitled to come and lay siege to the other kingdom. His making war in no way depends upon the continuing validity of the covenant. Just the opposite, it is because it is broken that the latter is entitled to make war!"

This is obfuscation and Kurt well knows it. The trouble is, he claims that I agree with his argument. He quotes me, but, he has badly misused my statements. Here is what he quoted: "Here is the principle that that any destruction of Israel was proof that she was out of covenant relationship with Jehovah" (*Like Father, Like Son*, p. 175).

Kurt wants to make me out to say that any violation of the covenant meant that the covenant was abrogated. I have never taught this. To the contrary, it meant that Israel, being judged, was being brought "under the bond of the covenant" (Ezekiel 20:37). The application of the covenant curses meant that Israel had broken the covenant, (thus, she lost the *covenant blessings*). **But, she was still under the covenant and subject to its curses!** My friend's attempt to manipulate my words demonstrates his desperation to find some semblance of support for his failed argument.

JESUS' TWO-FOLD ENTRANCE INTO THE MHP

Kurt made a historically unprecedented argument about Christ entering the MHP twice. You must catch that! Kurt, where are the commentators that agree with you assessment of Christ entering the MHP twice, *legally piercing the veil*, and then at the ascension? Where are they my friend?

Kurt claims that I misrepresented him by saying that this means Jesus must have entered at his death. So, Kurt says: "We believe that the typology of sprinkling the blood before the Mercy Seat was fulfilled when Jesus died." And he says Jesus "legally pierced the veil." He wound up saying what I said he did! You can't say he pierced the veil and sprinkled his blood on the mercy seat without saying he entered the MHP! This is semantic sophistry.

Where was the mercy seat, Kurt? If Jesus offered his blood on (or before) the mercy seat, where did he have to be? **Not outside the MHP!** And your claim about piercing the *legal veil* falls in light of Hebrews 6:20— Christ *actually*, not just in some vague legal sense, *Christ actually entered*.

Kurt has Jesus somehow offering his blood before the mercy-seat, **while he was on the cross**, but then, he

has Jesus actually entering the MHP (*where the mercy seat was!*) at his ascension.

Kurt's attempt to deflect my argument by saying that Jesus died "a sinner's death," and thus had to enter the MHP twice (but of course the first time he did not actually enter!) is specious. As I noted, **the only reason** the High Priest had to enter the MHP twice was **because he had to offer two sacrifices, one for his own sins, the other for the sins of the people.** Thus, if Jesus entered the MHP twice— **either legally or actually— he had to offer two sacrifices, and he had to offer a sacrifice for his own sin!** However, Hebrews 9:12 proves that Christ entered the MHP **once.** Kurt says twice. Jesus made one sacrifice, not two, and his entrance into the MHP — and his return— was essential for the fulfilling of the typological actions of the atonement. Kurt's **unprecedented argument** is simply wrong.

THE SPIRIT AS THE GUARANTEE OF REDEMPTION

I want to repeat an argument from my last. Kurt completely ignored it. This issue is critical and destructive to Kurt's position.

The promise of the Spirit was made to Israel *to raise her from the dead* (Ezekiel 37:10-14).

This "death" from which Israel was to be raised was not physical death, but *covenantal death* (Isaiah 24:4f; Hosea 5-6; 13:1-2). Living people were called *dead*, but they continued to "sin more and more" (Hosea 13:1-2). Biologically dead people cannot do this!

This is *spiritual death*- alienation from God as a result of sin (Isaiah 59:1-2--The sin that needed to be removed at the coming of the Lord, Isaiah 59:20f--Romans 11!). Sin brought death. Thus, forgiveness would bring resurrection (cf. Acts 26:17-18)!

This resurrection, *guaranteed by the Spirit*, would be Israel's salvation (Isaiah 25:8-9). This is the resurrection promise of 1 Corinthians 15 when sin, *the sting of death*, would be overcome (1 Corinthians 15:54-56— **Romans 11:26-27**). In other words:

1 Corinthians 15 foretold the resurrection (when sin would be put away, v. 55-56), predicted by Isaiah 25.

The resurrection of Isaiah 25 is the resurrection of Isaiah 26-27 (and thus, Romans 11:26-27), which would occur at the coming of the Lord in judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood. (Kurt, should we be concerned with the proper exegesis of Isaiah 25, since it is the source of Paul's resurrection doctrine)?

But, the coming of the Lord -- at the resurrection to put away sin-- of Isaiah 25-27 / 1 Corinthians 15-- would be the coming of the Lord in judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood.

Therefore, the coming of the Lord of Romans 11 to take away Israel's sin-- to bring her salvation-- is the coming of the Lord at the time of the resurrection, in judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood, i.e. AD 70.

I want to ask the reader to focus on this argument, and ask yourself why Kurt would ignore it. He ignored it *because he cannot answer it*, and because it *completely nullifies his entire (new) theology*.

The resurrection of 1 Corinthians 15 is the resurrection foretold in Isaiah 25-27.

The resurrection of Isaiah 25-27 is the coming of the Lord for the salvation of Israel in Romans 11.

Therefore, the coming of the Lord for the salvation of Israel in Romans 11 is the time of the coming of the Lord for the resurrection (the salvation of Israel), in 1 Corinthians 15--which Kurt posits in AD 70!.

Let me offer more:

The resurrection is when sin, the sting of death was to be overcome, (1 Corinthians 15:54-56).

The miraculous gifts of the Spirit were the guarantee of that resurrection (2 Corinthians 5:5; Ephesians 1:13).

Therefore, the miraculous gifts of the Spirit were the guarantee of the final victory over sin!

Let me offer another related affirmative as follow up:

The last enemy to be destroyed was death (Kurt agrees).

But, sin produced death (Romans 6:23; "the Law of sin and death).

The last enemy would be destroyed at the resurrection in AD 70 (Kurt agrees).

Thus, sin, which produced death, would be destroyed (for those "in Christ," and the power of his resurrection) at the resurrection in AD 70.

So, again, since the charismata was the guarantee of the resurrection, and since the resurrection is when sin, the sting of death would, of necessity, be overcome, it therefore follows that the charismata were the guarantee of the final victory over sin!

Kurt ignored all of this, but it proves, *prima facie* that while the cross was the power for the putting away of sin, that the work of the cross was not completed until the resurrection in AD 70. It proves that AD 70 was redemptively *critical*.

Since the Spirit was the guarantee of the resurrection, (in AD 70 per KS!), the time when sin, the sting of death would be overcome, it therefore follows that the coming of the Lord to put away sin in Romans 11:26f was the time of the resurrection in AD 70.

Kurt appeals to the fact that Christ would appear the second time "apart from sin" for salvation, and claims that this proves that the atonement was already completed before the parousia. It proves no such thing.

"Apart from sin" means that he would not make *any further sacrifice for sin*. That part of the atonement process was finished. He had already offered himself as sacrifice, now, he would return *to consummate the atonement process*. This is what Hebrews 9:28-10:1f affirms (which, again, **Kurt ignored**). The author said Christ had to appear the second time "for the

Law, having a shadow of good things to come." I have repeatedly asked Kurt to honor the present tenses, and the fact that Christ's second coming would be the fulfillment of the High Priestly actions of offering the sacrifice, entering the MHP, and then coming out, to bring salvation. Kurt has totally ignored. Instead, he has the atonement completed while Christ was on the cross— in clear violation of the typological atonement praxis.

And speaking of the resurrection, let me repeat my argument on Isaiah 27:

The coming of the Lord in Romans is the coming of the Lord of Isaiah 26-27, which is the coming of the Lord at the *resurrection* (Isaiah 25-27).

Kurt says the resurrection was in AD 70.

Therefore, the coming of the Lord in Romans 11 was in AD 70. (Kurt ignored this).

I made other arguments on Isaiah 27, but Kurt ignored them also.

My friend tries desperately to tell us that Isaiah 25-27— in spite of the fact that Paul appeals to these chapters— had nothing whatsoever to do with Biblical eschatology! So, again, why would Paul in his eschatological predictions, use these prophecies when per Kurt, they had *nothing to do with what Paul was predicting!*

BTW, Kurt claims that the sounding of the Trump in Matthew 24:31 had nothing to do with Isaiah 27. Well, Kurt, *virtually all commentators* who take note of the OT background of NT prophecies, tell us that Isaiah is the source of Matthew 24:31! Greg Beale, in his heralded, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Baker Academic, 2007)87, says Matthew 24:31 "echoes Isaiah 27:13 with its trumpet sounding on the day of deliverance, an allusion to the ingathering of Israel." I could list *volumes* of scholars in support. And, did you notice that Kurt did not challenge me to put "even one commentary" in a box in support of this? He knows full well that the scholarly consensus is that the sounding of the Trumpet in Matthew 24:31 is taken directly from Isaiah 27:13. So, my argument stands.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Kurt lays out four points that he claims I must prove to carry my proposition on Romans 11:

The coming referred to is the second, not first, advent of Christ. **Proven!**

The judgment and sentence associated with sin hung over the saints until AD 70; *viz.*, the cross did not cancel sin's debt. **Proven!** I have consistently proven that *the cross is the power of forgiveness*, and **gladly accept Kurt's argument that the benefits of Christ's atonement were not applied until the resurrection in AD 70.**

AD 70 represented the *legal* climax and termination of the Mosaic Covenant age; *viz.*, the law, including circumcision, animal sacrifices, the priesthood, dietary restrictions, etc, was valid and binding until AD 70. **Proven! Hebrews 9— for those outside of Christ**, (All blessings are "in Christ") **these stood valid until the time of reformation in AD 70. With Kurt now agreeing that the time of reformation did not fully arrive until AD 70, which is Covenant Eschatology!**

The judgment and sentence associated with sin were set aside in AD 70 by annulment of the law. **Proven!** I gladly accept Kurt's statement: "Christ tied the judgment to the end of the Mosaic age and the destruction of Jerusalem." (*Consummation*, 229).

I have fully proven each point.

In closing, let me urge the readers to go back and list all of my questions, and logical arguments that Kurt refused to even mention. This is revealing! If he could answer my questions and refute the arguments, he would do so with gusto! I assure you that when I am in the negative, I will not avoid Kurt's questions and arguments as he has done mine.

As I close, let me re-ask just a fraction of the questions I have asked Kurt, and all but begged him to answer. **He has ignored every one of them.** Unfortunately, I predict he will continue to do so. But of course, you the reader will be fully aware that he has done so.

If the removal of Torah was unnecessary for salvation, then **why did Christ die to remove Torah and apply grace?**

Is the forgiveness of sins and entrance into the MHP, *which would only come at the end of Torah*, necessary to salvation?

What was "the power of the holy people" mentioned in Daniel 12:7, that would not be broken until the resurrection in AD 70?

If Torah died at the cross, and no longer had any negative power to prevent entrance into the MHP, yet the saints did not actually enter the MHP until AD

70, why could the saints could not enter the MHP until AD 70?

My friend calls on me to recant Covenant Eschatology. Yet, he rejects proper exegesis, disparages logic, refuses to answer my arguments, ignores my questions. Furthermore, his own arguments and admissions affirm Covenant Eschatology! He has not given me **one good reason to reject the truth of Covenant Eschatology.**

I have, in every way, with explicit statements of scripture, with proper exegesis and hermeneutic, with valid logic, demonstrated, confirmed and proven my proposition. I now stand ready to negate Kurt's affirmative proposition.



(Simmons' Third Negative, Cont'd from page 1)

And anyone who likes may convict this statement of falsehood, if it be not the case that the whole Jewish nation was overthrown within one single generation after Jesus had undergone these sufferings at their hands. For forty and two years, I think after the date of the crucifixion of Jesus, did the destruction of Jerusalem take place." Origen, Contra Celsum, IV, xxi-xxii; Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. IV, p. 505, 506.

Origen was almost certainly a Preterist; he could not make this statement otherwise. Another early Christian writer who was a Preterist is Eusebius of Caesarea (AD 263–339), whose works are widely known and cited both in and out of Preterist circles. The Preterism of these and other early Christian writers establish Preterism as an interpretative method entitled to its place among respected scholarship. However, Covenant Eschatology is another thing entirely. Preterism traces its roots to the earliest history of the church and has been present in every age since, but Covenant Eschatology is new, whipped up by the imagination of Max King less than 40 years ago. The Mormons started in the 1830's. The Seventh Day Adventists date from about 1840's. The Jehovah's Witnesses date from about 1887-1912. Covenant Eschatology dates from the 1970's. The very newness of the doctrine is its own repudiation. Can Covenant Eschatology truly claim a rightful place in the "faith once delivered to the saints" when it is so totally new and unprecedented in its basic doctrines? Where was it ever heard in all of Christendom and its 2,000 years that the saints were under the law until AD 70? Where was it ever heard or taught that justification from sin was postponed until the asserted removal of the law AD 70? We find Preterism present from the very start, but Covenant Eschatology? Never! This should raise for us a warning flag, for *what is new in things Christian is invariably false.*

It is a general rule that the *one thing that makes any particular sect unique in Christendom is often the one thing that is wrong.* Seventh Day Adventists claim E.G. White was a latter day prophet and that Sabbath and dietary restrictions of the law are still binding. These are what make Adventists unique within Christendom, and it is these very things that are patently false. Jehovah's Witnesses deny the divinity of Christ, claim it is unlawful to receive blood transfusions, to celebrate birthdays or to vote.

These things make them unique, and each of these is manifestly false. Covenant Eschatology claims the law was still valid after the cross, that the saints continued under bondage to sin, and were not justified until the law was allegedly removed until AD 70. These are the things that make Covenant Eschatology unique and these are the very things that make it false.

As proof of the very real danger the error of Covenant Eschatology presents, we need only look to its author, Max King. It is no secret or coincidence that King is now the teacher of a false gospel; King's "Presence Ministries" preaches Universalism by which all men are allegedly saved without *faith*, without *repentance*, without *confession*, without *baptism*, and without the *cross*. The seeds of King's error appeared early on. Jim McGuiggan commented upon King's tendency to Universalism in their debate in the early 1970's (p. 111). Consider this comment from King's debate with McGuiggan (emphasis in original):

"The sting of death was **SIN**. But **WHAT** was the **STRENGTH** of sin? Paul said "**the Law.**" The victory is obtained through God's making...a **new creation...** where sin has strength no longer. Hence, the sting of death is removed forever." McGuiggan/King Debate, p. 98.

Notice, that at the very point where King should have said, the victory was obtained through the cross; instead the victory is attributed to removal of the law! The cross is displaced by AD 70! As King said in his later work, "***The defeat of sin is tied to the annulment of the old aeon of law...death is abolished when the state of sin and the law are abolished.***" (Max R. King, *The Cross and the Parousia of Christ*, p. 644, emphasis added). Sin is defeated by removal of the law? What?!!! What happened to the cross?!!! Notice also the latent seeds of Universalism inherent in this thought, where the asserted removal of the law disarmed the power of sin and death. *If the law condemned all men, and if the law was removed for all men, then all men are freed from condemnation of sin by the law.* Voila! Universalism! Compare King's statement with the words of Tim King, Max's son, 30 years later:

“Simply stated, man is changed because his world changed. Man is reconciled to God because he no longer lives under the rule of sin and death as determined by the Mosaic world. Through the gift of Christ he dwells in a world of righteousness and life. The issue is cosmic and corporate, not individual and limited” (Tim King, *Comprehensive Grace*, 2005).

Notice that King says *reconciliation is not individual, but cosmic and corporate, viz., universal*. All men are under grace and “dwell in a world of righteousness and life.” Notice also that the cross is totally away from King’s “Comprehensive Grace” (as he calls it). Man is not saved because the cross of Christ brought grace. He does not say, “Man is reconciled because of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.” No! Man is saved because the Mosaic law was taken away! Reconciliation did not happen at Calvary when Christ carried the debt of sin to the cross. No! Reconciliation happened when the law was supposedly removed by the destruction of Jerusalem! King’s 2009 conference was entitled “One Inclusive God.” A visit to his site will convince anyone that they have left Christianity and arrived at some form of new age religion and philosophy of man. I say with full sincerity that I believe Jehovah’s Witnesses and Mormons are more Biblically grounded than anything you will find in King’s ministry these days.

Yet, notwithstanding the obvious danger “Covenant Eschatology” presents and its *established record* of leading men into serious error and *eternal peril*, Don has clung tenaciously to it. Don once wrote, “***You cannot teach a doctrine without implications. And if the implications are dangerous, then the doctrine is dangerous.***” (Elements, p. 244). Somewhat ironically, when he said this Don was writing against Universalism among Preterists! Covenant Eschatology is the very fount and source of Universalism among Preterists! How can Don possibly defend it?

Don, the Cross, and Torah’s Mysterious “Negative Power”

We have repeatedly charged that Covenant Eschatology overthrows the cross of Christ. We have

repeatedly stated that the cross has dropped out of Don’s system of soteriology. We stated

“If the cross did not triumph over the law at Calvary, if man had to wait until the law was removed to be justified from sin, then nothing happened at the cross. This is the long and short of Don’s teaching: nothing happened at the cross.”

There could be no more serious charge leveled at the gospel preacher than to accuse him of overthrowing the cross. If there was any topic in this debate Don should have been zealous to vindicate and explain it is the accusation that Covenant Eschatology overthrows the Savior’s cross. Let the reader take note that despite repeated invitations, Don has absolutely refused to give us an explanation of what happened at the cross. Why? How difficult could it be? I could do it; the reader could do it; any Christian could do it. Why won’t Don? Clearly, it is because the cross and Covenant Eschatology are *mutually exclusive* systems, and to affirm the one is to deny the other. I know Don loves and honors the cross in his heart. But when the two systems are laid side by side, they cannot be reconciled. All that Christianity and the scripture normally associate with the cross, Covenant Eschatology attributes to AD 70.

Covenant Eschatology spiritualizes the resurrection and makes it equal with justification. Therefore, it cannot acknowledge that the debt of sin was extinguished (“blotted out” – Col. 2:14) at the cross, for that would not allow for a spiritualized resurrection in AD 70. Preterism simply states that the souls in Hades were received into heaven in AD 70, and therefore offers no violence to the cross. But the spiritualized resurrection of Max King and Don, which keeps man under the debt of sin until AD 70, must *relocate* justification and atonement, and to do so they must *take from the cross*. This is why Don has studiously sought to avoid discussion of the cross in this debate; he cannot credit *anything* to the cross without first taking *something* away from Covenant Eschatology. Consider the chart below: all that appears in the column under Covenant Eschatology, Christianity and scripture historically ascribe to the cross. Covenant Eschatology leaves the column below the cross completely empty. If this charge is false, then let Don place beneath the cross any item on the list. I think we will find that that there is

nothing on the list Don is willing to say *arrived* or *happened* at the cross.

Cross	Covenant Eschatology
?	Atonement - AD70
?	Justification – AD 70
?	Reconciliation – AD 70
?	Forgiveness of sins – AD 70
?	Legal admittance into presence of God with the veil – AD 70
?	Time of Reformation – AD 70
?	Spirits of just men made perfect – AD 70
?	Old Testament fulfilled and legally annulled – AD 70
?	Grace triumphant over law – AD 70

Don answered our question scripturally in his second affirmative, saying the cross triumphed over the law. But he takes it back in his third affirmative when he argues that the law was valid and imposed until AD 70 and had to be *independently removed* before grace could enter! (Don never did explain to us how the cross could triumph over the law, and not triumph over it at the same time. If the law still held man under the debt of sin after the cross, there obviously was no triumph!) Don states “**removal of Torah was essential for man’s justification after all!**” (emphasis in original). Don states, “Torah had to end in order for forgiveness, entrance into the MHP and life to become realities!” Dear reader, *we deny this totally and emphatically*. The law was taken away, not so grace could enter in, but because it was a *mere schoolmaster* to bring us to Christ; it was a system of types and shadows *pointing* to Jesus. Once Jesus was come, there was no further utility in the Mosaic system; it had served its provisional need and purpose and so was *annulled*. Nothing more or less.

That the law had to be removed for grace to enter is very serious error. Don states “Torah...prevented man from entering the MHP due to its inability to forgive.” According to Don, “the negative power of

Torah was such (in its failure to provide forgiveness) that as long as it stood, no one could enter the MHP!” Read that again. Why does Don insist that Torah had to be removed before grace could enter? BECAUSE TORAH COULD NOT FORGIVE! According to Don, it possessed some mysterious “negative power” that forestalled grace and the cross of Christ! ***Don, how does the inability of Torah to forgive prevent the addition of grace?*** Explain that for us, please! What is the mysterious “negative power” you mention? We deserve your explanation on this. I will gladly ignore that you have produced even a single verse showing the Old Testament was valid after the cross, and give you a *fourth affirmative* to explain for us what this mysterious “negative power” is. So, by all means, please provide us with this information. Moreover, please explain how the animal sacrifices, dietary restrictions, and other items of the law could forestall the atoning power of Christ’s blood? What is there in the continuing temple ritual that allegedly over-powered Jesus’ sacrifice and prevented it from providing forgiveness of sins until it was taken away?

Dear reader, this is the whole debate right here. If Don cannot provide some lucid, rational explanation from scripture about this mysterious “negative power” in Torah that prevented the power of Christ’s cross from bringing grace until Torah was allegedly removed in AD 70, then you must know his proposition is lost. Don MUST explain this. He said it; so he obviously has something in mind, and we are giving him a whole fourth affirmative for our edification and instruction. Preterism must settle this issue of Max Kingism once and for all so it free itself of these errors and move on. Will Don accept? Dare he refuse?

Dear reader, obviously, there is *nothing* in the temple ritual or *anywhere* in the law that can forestall God’s grace in Jesus Christ. NOTHING. Law doesn’t prevent grace, it invites it! ***The inability of Torah to forgive in no way implies it also possessed a negative power to prevent or forestall forgiveness of sin!*** What is Don’s proof of this “mysterious “negative power?” He has none! The whole concept is just one more bare assertion by Don without one “book, chapter, and verse” to back it up. To the contrary, grace triumphed over law. It is the *addition of grace that saves us, not removal of the law*. Proof of this is seen in the moral law and the law of sin and

death (“the wages of sin is death” Rom. 6:23). The moral law and law of sin and death have *never been removed*. Sin is as much condemned by God’s moral law today as it ever was! Fornication, adultery, theft, and murder are as unlawful, sinful, and condemned by God today as under the law of Moses. This has never changed and never will! Don, is it unlawful and sinful today to murder, rape or commit incest? Of course it is! Were these laws codified and part of the law of Moses? Yes, of course they were. Did these laws exist before Moses. Yes. Do they exist now; did removal of the law of Moses remove these laws? No, of course not. Does God’s law condemning immorality and sin prevent men from finding grace in Christ today? God forbid, may it never be! The very fact that the moral law (much of which was codified by Moses) continues to condemn today, but men can find forgiveness *proves* – irrefutably – that removal of law is in no way necessary for God’s addition of grace!

Don’s argument that the law had to be removed before grace could enter or obtain is *serious, serious error*; it overthrows the power and efficacy of Christ’s cross. It changes the very mechanism of salvation from the triumph of grace over law, to grace accomplished removal of law, fundamentally changing and perverting the gospel of Christ.

Don’s Proposition and Burden of Proof

Don is in the affirmative and has the burden of proof. To carry his case he must prove each and every element of his affirmative. At a minimum, Don must prove

- 1) The coming referred to in Rom. 11:25-27 is the second, not first, advent of Christ.
- 2) The judgment and sentence associated with sin hung over the saints until AD 70; *viz.*, the cross did not cancel sin’s debt.
- 3) AD 70 represented the *legal* climax and termination of the Mosaic Covenant age; *viz.*, the law, including circumcision, animal sacrifices, the priesthood, dietary restrictions, etc, was valid and binding until AD 70.
- 4) The judgment and sentence associated with sin were set aside in AD 70 by annulment of the law.

We are in the negative and need only negate ONE of the essential elements of Don’s proposition to prevail. In order to carry his case and establish his affirmative, we challenged Don if he could produce even ONE VERSE showing the saints continued under the debt of sin from and after the cross (#2 above). We put a box on the page and predicted that at the end of the debate it would still be empty. Don has now concluded his affirmative. He has written almost 50 pages of argument, but has failed to produce even ONE VERSE that expressly states or teaches that the saints continued under the debt of sin after the cross. I believe it is axiomatic that if Don cannot produce a verse to substantiate an essential tenant of his doctrine, that he has not and cannot carry his case. His failure on this one point has therefore negated his proposition.

In our second negative, we added a box for Don and challenged him to produce even ONE VERSE that stated or taught the saints required to observe the law, and that it was valid and binding (imposed) and until AD 70 (# 3 above). Here again Don failed. He could not produce even ONE VERSE, not one. We also asked Don if he could produce even ONE COMMENTATOR who agreed with his interpretation of Isa. 27:7-11 (#1 above). Again he failed. He could not cite one commentator who applied Isa. 27:7-11 to the fall of Jerusalem. His whole case turns upon his ability to prove Isa. 27:7-11 refers to the AD 70 coming of Christ, but not one commentator agrees with him. Don says all commentators agree that Paul quotes Isa. 27:7-11 in Rom. 11:25-27, but that is not mean they apply it to AD 70. If Don cannot provide some commentator that agrees it applies to AD 70, then we maintain he cannot prove his case. Finally, we concluded our second negative saying Don could not produce a verse that taught justification occurred in AD 70 (#4 above). Again, Don could not produce even ONE VERSE. Thus, for each of the *four essential elements* of Don’s proposition he cannot produce even one verse or commentator who agrees with him. Remarkable is it not? A doctrine that has deceived so many for the better part of 30 years, and when put to the test not even ONE VERSE can be produced to sustain its most basic suppositions!

So much for what Don could not produce or prove, what about the verses we brought forward to negative Don’s case? Don has consistently ignored all verses

that show the law was fulfilled and taken away, and that justification was full and free from and after the cross. He grandstands a lot about my exercising my right to pass over his arguments without comment, but he has ignored every verse we produce that shows grace was full and free from and after the cross. Here are *some* of the verses we have marshaled:

We noted that the gospels and Acts state *twenty-nine* times that Jesus fulfilled the law, providing these verses: Matt. 1:22; 2:15, 17, 23; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:35; 21:4; 26:54, 56; 27:9, 35; Mk. 14:49; 15:28; Lk. 4:21; 24:44; Jn. 12:38; 13:18; 15:25; 17:12; 19:24, 28, 36, 37; Acts 1:16; 3:18; 13:27, 29. Don ignored them.

We noted that the law of blood sacrifice foreshadowed the work of Christ upon the cross and was fulfilled in Jesus' substitutionary death and atoning sacrifice. We brought forward verses which state "by one offering Christ hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:4). HATH PERFECTED FOREVER. This is perfect tense, showing completed action in the past. Don made no attempt to controvert this, he just ignored it.

We brought forward Rom. 7:1-4, which states "YE ARE BECOME ARE DEAD TO THE LAW BY THE BODY OF CHRIST" Don says the law was still valid, binding and obligatory until AD 70. Paul says, it was dead. Who will you believe? Don ignored the verse. We brought forward Rom. 8:2, which states "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." HATH MADE ME FREE FROM THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH. What part of "hath made free" would Don deny? We'll never know because he just ignores these verses and refuses to interact with them. Another verse we brought forward is Rom. 6:14: "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." NOT UNDER THE LAW, BUT UNDER GRACE. This verse seems important to the subject, but did Don not address it? Of course not, how could he?

We cited Col. 2:14, which says Jesus nailed the debt of sin to his cross and took out of the way the handwriting of ordinances that was against us. Don denies this, too, totally ignoring this verse. He would not so much as interact with it. In Ephesians, Paul says Jesus had "abolished in his flesh the enmity,

even the law of commandments contained in ordinances" (Eph. 2:14, 15). HATH ABOLISHED IN HIS FLESH...THE LAW OF COMMANDMENTS CONTAINED IN ORDINANCES. Don says the law was still valid and binding; all was valid until none was valid, right Don? Paul says it was abolished in Jesus' flesh. Don ignores all this and pushes blindly ahead.

The writer of Hebrews states that Christians had come to "God the Judge of all and the spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. 12:23). THE SPIRITS OF JUST MEN MADE PERFECT! Made perfect how? By the blood of Christ. Don denies this and says the saints continued under bondage to sin until AD 70, otherwise they would have been resurrected at the cross! In this case he did at least acknowledge the verse, claiming it was merely "proleptic" and looked forward to the perfection that would only really come at AD 70. His authority? Bare assertion, nothing more. He has to "re-write" the passage to fit his doctrine and upon his own authority does so. The Hebrew writer also says believers had come to the "church of the firstborn" and to "Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Heb. 12:23,24). Don, are these proleptic? Will you now tell us that the church was not established until AD 70, that the New Testament, ratified by Jesus' blood, did not come until AD 70? If one part is "proleptic" why are not they all? I think the reader can see that Don's creative re-writing of the text to fit his doctrine is without merit and that the blood of Christ had made the spirits in Hades perfect just as it had "perfected forever" (Heb. 10:14) the saints on this side of eternity.

Continuing on, touching this last point, we cited Col. 2:10 "and ye are complete in him." "Complete" here has the meaning of being soteriologically perfected, lacking nothing necessary to our salvation. Did Don interact with this verse to show us why this was not true, why it would only become true in AD 70? No, he just ignored it. We showed that Paul said, "For if when we were enemies, we **were reconciled** to God by the death of his Son, much more, **being reconciled**, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have **now received the atonement**" (Rom. 5:10, 11). WERE RECONCILED. HAVE NOW RECEIVED THE

ATONMENT. Notice the verb tense. Perfect tense, showing completed action in the past. Don denies the atonement was received or even complete until AD 70. Needless to say, he simply ignores these verses and will not even so much as acknowledge they exist. Perhaps he felt that since he cannot even produce one verse in his own support, he needed to ignore our verses to help “even things up.” But ignoring these verses doesn’t make them go away; it only demonstrates the weakness of his case. If we produced only ONE VERSE, (and those above are but a sample of the many we cited), we would have produced 100% more verses than Don! If we cited ten verses, it would be 1,000% more than Don. But we produced dozens and dozens of verses, all which Don just ignores. Don has NO VERSES, we have MANY VERSES. If we had only ONE VERSE it would be sufficient to negate Don’s proposition, because he has NONE. Clearly, Don’s case is lost and it is a perfect absurdity for him to pretend otherwise.

Max King’s Contradictions

Since the topic of the continuing validity of the law has come up, it is worth our while to point out that Max King contradicts himself on this very topic. McGuiggan caught him in this during their debate. It is essential to King’s position that Christians continued under bondage of sin by the law until AD. This is Don’s position in this debate. Obviously, this is a very tenuous position to take; Don cannot produce a single verse to support it. Is it any wonder then that King was forced to contradict himself on this critical issue? First, let us notice King’s position that places Christians under the law:

“The natural body that was sown (verse 44) answers to the fleshly or carnal system of Judaism...Though the saints were in the kingdom that was conceived on Pentecost, they were not yet delivered from the world or natural body (Judaism) wherein this conception took place.” (*Spirit of Prophecy*, p. 200, 201)

So the “natural body” equals Judaism, and the saints were part of the natural body (Judaism), and NOT YET DELIVERED, right? Now, let us ask, Where did death reign? King’s answer:

“But how was death swallowed up in victory? The answer is quite obvious, Where was death resident? Did it not reign in the mortal or natural body of Judaism?...But when that died, and from it arose a spiritual body clothed with incorruption and immortality, death was defeated. It lost its hold over the subjects of the natural body because they were raised through Christ into the spiritual body of life and immortality. Death was in the ‘natural body’ because of sin, and sin received its strength from the law.” (Ibid, p. 202).

“Death” for King is not physical death, but spiritual death or “sin-death” as his also calls it. Thus, spiritual death and sin reigned in the mortal body of Judaism by the law, of which Christians were part, but were delivered only when Judaism died in AD 70. Death lost its hold when the natural body died and a spiritual body allegedly arose in AD 70, right? (Dear reader, have you ever read any passages anywhere at any time about the resurrection of “Judaism” into a new body in AD 70? I haven’t, but this is what Don asks us to believe. Note, also that according to King and Don, Gentiles were under Judaism waiting “resurrection” too!) Now, hear King contradict himself and say the church was NOT under the law:

“No one contends that Gal. 1:4 speaks of their deliverance from the Law (Jewish system) but rather from the Jewish age, the vicious persecution and distresses heaped upon the saints.” (McGuiggan/King debate, p. 93).

Deliverance from the mere persecutions of the Jewish age? Not under the Law? Hear him again:

“And to speak of the ‘shackles of Judaism’ is not to say that those saints were under the Law.”

Here King attempts to deny his teaching that the saints were under the law! But McGuiggan would have none of it and caught him cold in his contradictions! (pp. 107, 108) But King’s contradictions are not confined to his debate. His book “Spirit of Prophecy” also expressly denies the saints were under the law!

“Second, the law did not end at the cross, nor was it completely fulfilled then as seen in Matt. 5:17, 18. It was, however, taken out of the way for *those who accepted Christ*. Through Christ they died to the law and received deliverance from it. All of the New Testament scriptures that speak of the law’s being ‘nailed to the cross,’ or ‘taken out of the way’ are in reference to the saints that came by way of the cross. ‘In Christ’ was the state wherein the law was abolished or done away, but aside from Christ not one jot or tittle passed from the law till all was fulfilled. The law did not end in death or destruction but in fulfillment!”

This is clearly contradictory of everything King (and Don) teaches elsewhere about the saints being in the natural body of Judaism under bondage of “sin-death” and looking for deliverance at the second coming. He now says in this passage that **“the law was abolished or done away”** for Christians! But if the law is done away for Christians, then they clearly are not in the “natural body” of Judaism looking for deliverance (justification) in AD 70! Hopeless contradiction! And why is King forced into this position? Because it is impossible to make all the verses Don has ignored in this debate go away, so King tries to reconcile them, still clinging to his abstract notions about a spiritualized resurrection. But all he ends up doing is contradicting himself. The lesson for us is that Covenant Eschatology is a sojourn in “cloud land,” an imaginary world of double-speak and self-contradiction invented by Max King that has no existence in the real world or scriptures.

Two Concurrent, Conflicting Covenants?

One of the more obvious problems of Covenant Eschatology is its insistence that the ceremonial and other ordinances of the Old Testament were valid and imposed until AD 70 even though the New Testament was in place. King and Don must postpone justification and grace until AD 70 in order for their idea of a spiritualized resurrection to occur at that time, and therefore must keep the dead ordinances of the law alive, even though the gospel of Jesus Christ was already in force and effect. Thus, if we are to believe them, there were two, conflicting, mutually exclusive covenants in force at the same

time! If there was ever a system of belief rife with self-contradiction, this would have to be it! On the one hand we have the shadow system of ceremonial law that can never forgive sins and therefore styled by a “ministration of death”, and on the other hand we have the gospel of life and grace ordained to replace the Old system, both theoretically valid and binding at the same time! Imagine, if you will, a State legislature amending its penal code, replacing the corpus of criminal statutes with new, conflicting ones, then having both valid at the same time! Which laws are men charged to obey? They cannot obey both, for one contradicts the duties and obligations of the other. Both cannot be valid for one set of statutes makes illegal what the other expressly commands! The very notion of two covenants in force at one time is so totally at odds with scripture and all human experience that it is hardly necessary to refute it. Let us look at few scriptures that show the Old Testament was annulled at the cross. We looked at some of these before, but Don ignored them.

Heb. 9:17 states **“a testament is of force after men are dead.”** Thus, the New Testament and gospel of Jesus Christ came into force and effect AT HIS DEATH UPON THE CROSS. No one can have two valid wills; one must always amend or replace the other! Ask any lawyer, or anyone who has ever made a will. When a man changes his will, he always recites that the amended will revokes all previous wills. The only exception would be a codicil, in which case one merely amends his existing will, rather than replacing it. It is abundantly clear that the New Testament did not merely amend the Old; it is not a codicil of the Old Testament, it altogether replaces it. “When he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second” (Heb. 10:8, 9). **TAKETH AWAY THE FIRST THAT HE MAY ESTABLISH THE SECOND.** When was the second, the New Testament established? At Jesus’ death! A testament is of force after men are dead! Don must deny the legal efficacy of the New Testament in order to keep the dead ordinances of the Old Testament alive, or admit that the latter gave way to the former at the cross.

Rom. 7:1-4 teaches us that the law of the first husband (Old Testament) was nullified by the death

of Christ, so that we could enter a new marital covenant with a new husband (the risen Savior) under a new law (the gospel). These four verses show not only that the saints were “**dead to the law**” by the body of Christ and therefore loosed from the debt of sin, but also that the old law was nullified *in toto*. The law of marriage terminates upon the death of the husband. “The woman which hath a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband” (Rom. 7:2). The law of the first husband was the Old Testament. “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ” (v. 4). **DEAD TO THE LAW BY THE BODY OF CHRIST**. This is Christianity 101, folks! To buy into Covenant Eschatology you have to forget the ABC’s of salvation. The Old law died with the body of Christ at the cross. Don, what part of “dead to the law” would you deny?

Gal. 5:1 – “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage.” This verse, indeed, the *whole book* of Galatians, stands for the proposition that the saints were *not under the law* but under liberty and grace, and were not to submit to Judaizing teachers who insisted the law was “valid, binding, and obligatory” (like Don). The ceremonies of the law could not bring remission of sins. To obtain salvation, one had to stand fast in Christ. To revert to the system of law was to deny Christ and to fall from grace (v. 2, 4). “For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God” (Gal. 2:19). “Through the law” (through Christ’s fulfillment of the law by his substitutionary death and atoning sacrifice) “I am dead to the law” (I am loosed from the sentence of sin and death by the sacrifice of Christ) “that I might live unto God” (turn from sin and reliance upon my own merits, trusting instead upon the merits of Christ’s blood). Given that this whole book is devoted to the topic of showing that Christians were not under the law, and, indeed, specifically charged not to submit to it, how can Don honestly ask us to believe that both systems were equally valid, or that there was any validity in the continuing ritual of the law?

The Time of Reformation

For Don, the time of reformation equals the Christian era and gospel system, which he says arrived in AD

70. “The time of reformation did not arrive until the second coming AD 70,” Don says. Since two Testaments cannot be in force simultaneously, apparently Don wants us to believe that the gospel did not attain legal efficacy until AD 70. This would be the logical implication of his view that the cross did not triumph over the law, but that it had to be separately removed by the destruction of Jerusalem. Thus, the Romans took away what Jesus’ cross could not! Good grief! We believe, however, the better view is that the *time of reformation* answers to the *time of transition* during which the ordinances of the law were annulled and those of the gospel laid down. The time of reformation was marked by the gifts of the Holy Ghost, which served to guide the apostles into all truth. It began at the cross and ended when “that which is perfect is come” (I Cor. 13:), or no later than AD 70 when the charismata ceased. In our view, “that which is perfect” answers to the “restitution of all things” (Acts. 3:21). Peter said that heaven would receive Jesus *until* the restitution/restoration of all things (that is, when all things were put aright), then the Lord would return. This of course is what we see in Heb. 9, where the time of reformation *precedes* (*not follows*) the return of the Lord (v. 28). Thus, reformation brought us to the point where all things were “put aright,” then Christ returned, all by AD 70. However, where Don wants the time of reformation to *arrive* in AD 70, instead we find that is when it ended!

Dear reader, had the reformation arrived when Martin Luther began his work of reform or not? Of course it had. What kind of nonsense would it be to talk about the Reformation arriving at the *end* of Luther and the reformers’ work?! “The Reformation arrived when Luther was done.” No, the Reformation describes the period when the work *began* until it was *complete*, then it passed away and the *restored church* assumed its place. This is why we always speak of the Protestant Reformation in the past tense. The church is now “reformed” and hopefully “restored” to its apostolic purity (more or less!). Catholic “Canon Law” was imposed UNTIL the Reformation began. It was not valid during the Reformation, not at least to the Reformers. In the same way, the law of Moses was imposed UNTIL the time of reformation was initiated at the cross, but was not valid during the reformation. Jesus said “the law and the prophets were UNTIL John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached” (Lk. 16:16). That is, the message

of Moses and the prophets was exhausted and had run its course; beginning with John a new message was preached. The time of reformation served as a transitional phase during which the outmoded and obsolete rituals of the law were *taken out of the way* and replaced by the ordinances of the gospel.

As we have seen over and over again, the Jews' continued adherence to the law marked them as enemies of Christ. Like Don, they claimed the law was still valid and binding and sought to impose it upon the church in Palestine, Asia and the world. For this, Paul said they were preaching "another Jesus" and "another gospel" and pronounced a curse upon them. Covenant Eschatology is identical to 1st century Judaism in claiming the law was obligatory and binding after the cross. Can't you hear the Judaizers? "The law is binding and valid notwithstanding the cross." And what does Don say? "The law was binding and valid notwithstanding the cross." Unless the Judaizers were right and Paul wrong, I would suggest the law was annulled at the cross. Isaiah said that the rituals of the law before the destruction of Jerusalem were abominated by God (Isa. 66:3). Don agrees and says that it was the Jews' *keeping the law* that marked them as objects of divine wrath. "***The old city had not only served its purpose, it had also become the enemy of God, by holding onto the Old Covenant***" (*Ibid*, p. 193). So, Don tells us on one hand the law is binding and divinely imposed, but that it made those who obeyed into enemies of God! Don, how can what God abominated and marked the Jews for wrath have been valid, binding and obligatory? Tell us please.

Atonement Ritual and Resurrection of Christ

Max King invented the notion that atonement for sins was delayed until AD 70 to accommodate his view of a collective, spiritualized resurrection in AD 70. This is *not* the figurative resurrection of believers as they *one-by-one* obey the gospel and are baptized (Rom. 6:3-6; Eph. 2:1, 6). Rather, King's view is that the whole (collective) body of believers was somehow mysteriously raised up out of the purported grave of Judaism in AD 70 into a new resurrection body in Christ. Of course, Paul speaks of the body of Christ (the church) already existing long before AD 70, so where this resurrection body purportedly came from, how it died merely because Jerusalem was destroyed, and was then raised again in yet another body is a

total mystery upon which the scriptures are absolutely silent. Max King is a great fiction writer and supplies the details in his books, and anyone who is interested in the genre of fantasy may pursue the topic at their own leisure and peril.

In order to postpone justification until AD 70, King came up with the idea that the atonement ritual began at Christ's ascension and was not complete until he came a second time. Support for this notion was found in Heb. 9, particularly verse 28 where Christ appears a "second time without sin unto salvation." This "salvation" is assumed to be salvation from sin, but we believe the better view is that the salvation in mind is the putting all enemies beneath Christ's feet (Heb. 2:8; 10:13) and the deliverance of the church from her persecutors by the outpouring of wrath upon the Jews and Romans. If there was anything to the idea that the saints continued under the debt of sin from and after the cross, or that they were only justified in AD 70 by removal of the law, Don should have been able to put one or two verses in the boxes we gave him. But since after 50 pages of argument Don could not find a single verse to put in any of the boxes (he could not even suggest a verse for us to argue over, he left the boxes completely empty), we can safely dismiss King's notion for the frivolous and unscriptural piece of fiction it is.

When then was the blood accepted by God within the veil and the atonement deemed legally complete? We believe this occurred at the cross, at the time of our Savior's death. Evidence for this fact is seen in the veil being "rent in twain" when Jesus died, showing the debt of sin was paid and the way into the presence of God within the Holy of Holies was now open. Don denies this, but when we asked him to explain the theological significance of the veil being rent in two, he fell suddenly silent and declined comment. His silence must therefore be taken as an admission that he has no alternative explanation to offer. Other evidence corroborating our view is the writer of Hebrews, who urged Jewish Christians not to shrink back under the Old Testament ritual typified by the first sanctuary, but to draw nigh unto God, and "boldly enter" his presence within veil (the Holy of Holies) by virtue of Jesus' sacrifice.

Obviously, this does not contemplate actual and spatial entrance into God's presence, for that cannot occur until man puts off the body in death.

Therefore, the entrance contemplated by the writer was legal and covenantal. Just as they “had come” unto the “heavenly Jerusalem, to God the judge of all, to the innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of the New Testament, and to the blood of sprinkling” (Heb. 12:22-24), just as they had done all these legally and covenantally, they could and should enter boldly within the veil, legally and covenantally, where they could find grace and help in time of need (Heb. 4:16). **The Holy of Holies was a figure for the New Testament** (Heb.9:9), and if the New Testament was valid, then the way into the Holy of Holies *ipso facto* was open and valid. But as entrance into God’s presence was closed until the atonement was complete, it is axiomatic that ratification of the New Testament, atonement, and entrance within the veil were concurrent events, and that all happened at the “death of the testator” (Heb. 9:17). And we have Paul’s word for it, saying, “we have now received the atonement” (Rom.). Reduced to a syllogism, it might look like this:

No man could enter the Holy of Holies until the atonement was complete.

But the Holy of Holies was a figure for the New Testament and gospel.

The New Testament was of force from and after the cross. Therefore,

The atonement was complete and man could enter (legally and covenantally) the Holy of Holies from and after the cross.

We hasten to add that Jesus’ resurrection was God’s objective proof that the atonement was complete. Having died a sinner’s death under imputation of sin, Jesus could not rise from the dead and enter heaven unless and until that imputation was removed. Therefore, Paul says, “he was delivered for our offenses, and was raised for our justification” (Rom. 4:25). It is the fact that Jesus was raised justified that also justifies us. This is why Peter says we are born again by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (I Pet. 1:3; *cf.* 3:21). The acquittal of Jesus from the imputation of sin at his resurrection is the basis for our acquittal from sin. And this is reflected in Christian baptism. Baptism is a symbolic and sacramental participation in the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord. Each time someone is baptized, the death, burial and resurrection of Christ

is re-enacted, and Christ’s justification by receipt of his blood within the veil *at his death* is shown anew. In baptism, the subject is “buried with Christ by baptism into death,” and “raised in newness of life” (Rom. 6:3-6). If we are raised from baptism justified from sin, then Christ was necessarily raised from the dead justified from sin, for it is his death, burial, and resurrection we are united with in baptism. Will Don deny Jesus died under imputation of sin? Will he deny he was raised justified, free from imputation of sin (Rom. 6:7, 10)? But if Christ was justified from the imputation of sin at his resurrection, it is clear that his blood was received by God within the veil *before* his ascension, and that can only mean it was received by God *at his death*. Hence, the notion that mankind had to wait for the second coming for the atonement to be complete and grace to enter is totally at odds with the most elementary instruction of the church and scripture as embodied in the ordinance of baptism and the resurrection of our Lord. Covenant Eschatology yet *again* is shown to be a dangerous doctrine contradicting the most basic teachings of the Christian faith.

Miscellaneous Arguments of Don

Argument from the Transfiguration - Don argues that the Transfiguration of Christ is a before-the-fact vision of his second coming. Naturally, there is nothing in the Transfiguration taken alone that would suggest this. However, because Peter used the word "parousia," saying they had not believed cleverly devised fables when they made known the "power and coming" of the Lord, but were eye witnesses of his majesty on the Mount of Transfiguration, men have supposed that the second coming is referred to. Personally, I have never been persuaded of that fact. I have always taken II Pet. 1:16 in reference to the *first advent* of our Lord. I have always felt that it was the miracles and works of wonders that he is assuring the reader are not mere fables, and that Peter evokes the events he witnessed during the Transfiguration as proof of the verity of what had been reported. Dear reader, do you see *anything* in the transfiguration normally associated with the second coming? I don't. I don't see any of the imagery that occurs in Revelation or Matthew 24. I don't see visions of Hades delivering up its dead. I see nothing that would suggest the second coming is in view. The only way you can get the second coming out of the Transfiguration is to go to II Peter, and then only by

his use of the word "parousia" which word is used of Titus, Timothy, and others and has no inherent reference to the second advent of the Lord. To my mind, if the transfiguration is a vision of anything, it is a revelation of Jesus' divinity and Sonship, nothing less or more.

But whether the transfiguration is a vision of the second coming or not is really moot. We can grant Don his "major premise" and it will not help him, for his "minor premise" is totally suppositional and without support. Don's syllogism reads like this:

The Transfiguration was a vision of the Second Coming of Christ (2 Peter 1:16f).

But, the Transfiguration was a vision of the end of the Mosaic Covenant and the establishment of the New Covenant of Christ.

Therefore, the end of the Mosaic Covenant was at the Second Coming of Christ.

Can you spot the error in Don's minor premise? That's right, he assumes the point to be proved! He asserts without proof that the transfiguration was a vision of the end of the Old Testament and the establishment of the New Covenant (he avoids use of the word "Testament" because this ties the event to Jesus' death and, naturally, he can have none of that!). What proof does Don have that the transfiguration is a vision of the end of the Mosaic Covenant? Moses and Elijah appeared on the mount speaking with the Lord about his coming death upon a cross in Jerusalem! (Lk. 9:31). Call me crazy, but if the transfiguration is about the end of the Old Testament as Don asserts, and if Moses and Elijah are speaking with the Lord about his coming death upon a Roman cross, I would tie the end of the Old Testament to the cross, not second coming! Let us be candid. The appearance of Moses and Elijah upon the mount of transfiguration is ambiguous taken alone. The only information we can draw from the event is from what they discussed, and this was not AD 70, but Calvary. Don's attempt to get to AD 70 through II Pet. 1:16 is tenuous at best. Argument is no substitute for verses. If Don could put some verses in the boxes we provided him, he would not have to rely upon "ify" argumentation to fill in the blanks.

Argument from Isa. 27 - Let's revisit Don's argument from Isa. 27:7-11 a bit. In his second affirmative, Don made the following argument: "The

coming of the Lord to take away Israel's sin in Romans 11:26f is the coming of the Lord at his coming in judgment of Israel foretold by Isaiah 26-27, when He would call the dead--those scattered to the four winds-- to Him (i.e. the *resurrection*) by the sounding of the Great Trumpet (Isaiah 27:13)."

I pointed out that Don has assumed the very fact to be proved; that he had NOT established the connection between Isa. 27:7-11 and Rom. 11:25-27. Don retorts in his third affirmative that I admit the connection between Isa. 27 and Rom. 11 when I made the following statement. "In Romans 11:26, 27, Paul blends two passages from Isaiah together into one. He quotes Isa. 59: 20, 21, then follows up with Isa. 27:9." That is what most, but not all commentators say, and in making that statement I reported the majority opinion. But Don misses the point. Don equates the coming in Rom. 11 with the coming in Isa. 27, right? But the coming in Rom. 11 is taken, *not from Isa. 27*, but Isa. 59! That's right! "The Redeemer shall come to Zion" is from Isa. 59:20, 21. Isa. 27 is not quoted in Rom. 11 in connection with a "coming" at all. Or should I say, "if" at all, for it is more probable that Paul actually quotes Jer. 31:31-34 and not Isa. 27, for the forgiveness of sin connected with the "covenant" (Isa. 59:21) attaches to the New Testament, not the Assyrian invasion (or fall of Jerusalem), right? And this is the position of *James, Brown and Faucett's Commentary*:

"This is my covenant with them literally, "this is the covenant from me unto them." **when I shall take away their sins** This, we believe, is rather a brief summary of Jer. 31:31-34."

When we first began our discussion with Don about Rom. 11:25-27 last August or so, we repeated what most commentators say, that Paul quotes Isa. 27:9 in this place, but further study has led us to conclude this is unlikely and that that better view is that Jer. 31:31-34 is in view, as the commentator above states. For what does the forgiveness of sins have to do with the Assyrian invasion? But to return, Don wants to borrow the coming in Rom. 11 quoted from Isa. 59 and apply it to Isa. 27. Good grief! Talk about exegetical summersaults! Dear reader, Isa. 27:7-11 is about the Assyrio-Babylonian invasions and virtually all commentators agree upon this fact. Don could not produce a single commentator who applies it to AD

70 like he does. Clearly, the connection is NOT made and Don's attempt to "borrow" the coming from Isa. 59 quoted in Rom. 11, apply it to Isa. 27, then claim that "the coming of the Lord to take away Israel's sin in Romans 11:26f is the coming foretold by Isaiah 27," is simply untenable. And while we are on this passage, let me point out that Don totally manufactures a quote I never made. Don states:

And now, Kurt desperately claims that I have not: "established ANY CONNECTION between Rom. 11:25-27 and Isa. 26. NONE! The same is true of Isaiah 59."

I hate to be a stickler, but the last seven words of the quote Don attributes to me I never said. Don has somehow made them up! The reader should copy and paste those seven words into his computer's search function and search my second negative to see if I ever made that statement. It gives me no pleasure to point this out, but Don has done this sort of thing so many times in this debate that I feel compelled to speak out. If he is continuously willing to misrepresent me and attribute statements to me that I have not made (four times in his second affirmative alone¹), how can we have any confidence in his handling of the word of God? If he handles God's word with the same cavalier manner in which he deals with my words, is it any wonder he asserts so much, yet can prove so little, and has no verses to sustain his case?

Unsound Methodology - A point came up in Don's first affirmative that I never bothered responding to, but since he has brought it up again, and because it sheds light on a problem with his overall methodology which may be helpful to both him and

¹ However innocent his mistake, the fact remains I never "claimed Rom.11:26f *predicts* the salvation of individual Jews throughout the entirety of the endless Christian age." The text predicts nothing about ethnic Jews after AD 70, and I certainly never suggested it did. Given the nation was destroyed in AD 70 and God now sees all men alike without regard to ethnicity, it is not the sort of thing I would be apt to say.

the community in general, we'll take it up now. Here is a quote from Don:

"Of course, **just last year**, in his *Sword and Plow*, when objecting to my position on Romans 11 / Isaiah 27, Kurt said: 'We do not disallow the possibility that there is a *plenior sensus* (*fuller meaning, DKP*), to Isaiah 26:21 that may look beyond its historical setting to Christ's second coming.' Realizing the *fatal nature of this admission*, Kurt has now completely reversed himself. So, **just last year** Kurt said that Isaiah 27 could apply to both the Cross and AD 70. But now, he denies that it speaks of either one! It is exclusively the Assyrian invasion!"

Did you notice what Don did? I said it is possible Isa. 26:21 may have a *plenior sensus* that looks beyond its historical setting to the second coming, and Don ran with that and applied it to Isa. 27, saying I made an admission about *that* text! This sort of broad-brush approach is all through Don's material and betrays a fundamental error in his methodology in dealing with scripture, particularly Isaiah (to say nothing about misrepresenting me). More than any other prophet, Isaiah changes topics 3-4-5 times in a single chapter, now speaking of Israel's sin, now of the coming captivity, now about the sins of the nations around Israel, now about the return of the captivity, now about the Messiah, all within the span of often less than 30 verses! In chapter 27 (which is only 13 verses long), Isaiah changes topics *three* different times. He begins by talking about the defeat of Leviathan (world, heathen civil power), changes to wrath upon the Jews by the Assyrian invasion, and ends talking about the re-gathering of Israel from the Assyrian captivity. Thus, defeat of the world civil power (Assyria/Leviathan) precedes the invasion of Israel, where we would expect instead it to precede the re-turn of the captivity!

This rapid change of subject matter and the random chronological order of events portrayed is what makes Isaiah so difficult to interpret, and anyone who has read the book is aware of this fact. Overlooking this, Don sees something that may apply to the second advent, and automatically assumes that neighboring verses must apply to that event also, when in fact nothing could be further from the truth.

He does this in the case at hand. Isa. 26:21 may have a *plenior sensus* that looks to the second coming. But does that mean Isa. 27:7-11 also applies to the second coming? In this case, Don could not find one commentator who agreed with him, so I feel it is safe to say, No, it does not. Don made the same mistake with the "trumpet" of verse 13, where, merely because it was similar sounding to Matt. 24:31, he assumed both referred to the identical event. Yet, Isa. 27:13 is clearly about the return of the captivity from Assyria and Egypt, not the general resurrection as supposed by Don. Yes, they are similar in sound and borrow from a common source and theme (the Jubilee), but that hardly means the same events are in view. This sort of sloppy argumentation from scripture is all through Don's syllogisms and is why syllogisms are so *dangerous* to build doctrine upon, particularly where you have no express statements in scripture to back your conclusions up (like Don's empty boxes)! Syllogisms should be built upon plain statement of scripture, not deductions. Don builds his arguments upon deductions rather than scripture and that is why he errs so great and so often.

Entering the Most Holy

Much of this debate and most of Don's last affirmative turned upon the argument that if the saints were soteriologically complete at the cross, they should then and there have entered the Holy of Holies (heaven). Apparently this is Don's best argument since he makes it so many times (a dozen times it seemed in the last affirmative alone!). Yet, does Don cite any verses? Does he have a verse that says "the dead would enter heaven the *moment* they were cleansed from sin"? No! Don has no verses, but argues totally from deductions! Don, God doesn't have to do things the way you suppose he ought or should; God does things when and as it pleases him. Hebrews describes the righteous dead in Hades, saying they were the "spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. 12:23). If Don is unwilling to accept this simple statement of scripture, there is nothing I or anyone else can do. That they were still in Hades, though perfected by Christ's blood, is Don's problem, not God's. God said that death would be the *last enemy* put beneath Jesus' feet (I Cor. 15:26). It is the last enemy, because it was the *ultimate enemy*, and it pleased God that the resurrection follow defeat of the Romans and Jews who were opposing the gospel and persecuting the church.

There is nothing to Don's argument that they had to enter heaven as soon as they were justified, and it is certainly a poor argument to prove the law was valid until AD 70, for until Don's proves the existence of his mysterious "negative power" in the law, its continuing validity cannot prevent the entrance of grace in any event.

Power of the Holy People

Again, Don argues from deduction without verses. He asserts that the "power of the holy people" was the Old Testament. Really? What was the "power" of the Roman people? What was the "power" of the Assyrian Empire? God said he would "overthrow the throne of kingdoms and destroy the *strength of the kingdoms* of the heathen" at Christ's coming to shake the heavens and earth (Haggai 2:22). This occurred at the *same time* the power of the holy people was destroyed (Dan. 12:7; cf. Heb. 12:26, 27). Why should the *strength* of the kingdoms differ from the *power* of the Jews? Clearly, they do not, and Don errs again.

Conclusion

I began to notice the contradictions I had picked up from King about three years ago, and it has taken until only recently for the scales to fall completely from my eyes. This debate has helped a lot, and for that I am indebted to Don. It took me several years to "unlearn" my mistakes, so I do not expect Don to change overnight. Even so, and however much I want to be charitable toward my brother, his persistence in insisting that the law was valid despite so great a cloud of evidence to the contrary worries and disturbs me. It is my belief, indeed, my hope and prayer that after this public debate, privately, Don will quietly distance himself from Covenant Eschatology and that a few years from now we will find that he is no longer advocating this dangerous doctrine. And let me add that most reading this debate would agree that Max King and the people at "Presence Ministries" are at risk of eternal peril for their corruption of the gospel and teaching Universalism. However, that story need not end in tragedy. We encourage Max to renounce Covenant Eschatology and to return to the fold and gospel of Christ while life and hope remain, before it is too late.