

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Preterism's Achilles' Heel

Preterism's Achilles' Heel - posted by docs (), on: 2018/4/14 15:58

The cornerstone of replacement theology is "Preterism," the belief that holds that the Tribulation prophecies occurred in the first century, and thus are past (Kenneth Gentry). The hallmark of Preterism is its denial of the futurity of "the great tribulation" (specifically Mt 24:21). But compare closely the parallel relationships between Jer 30:7; Dan 12:1 and Mt 24:21. It is clear that the very language of Daniel's prophecy of an "unequaled" tribulation borrows directly from Jeremiah's prophecy of the same event, as Jesus not only describes the great tribulation by His own word for word reference to Daniel (compare Dan 12:1; Mt 24:21), but explicitly directs His disciples to pay attention to Daniel as the source prophecy for the events that signal His return (Mt 24:15; with Dan 9:27; 11:31; 12:11).

Any comparison of these texts, particularly in their larger contexts (e.g. Dan 7:21-25; Dan 11:36-45; Dan 12:1-13 with 2 Thes 2:1-8; Rev 11-13), displays a clear and inextricable connection between (1) the "unequaled" tribulation (the tribulation the great Dan 12:1; Mt 24:21; Rev 7:14), (2) the brief career of Antichrist (Dan 7:25; 9:27; 12:11; Rev 11:2; 13:5), and (3) the post-tribulational return of Christ (Mt 24:21-31; 2 Thess 2:1-3, 8).

This complex of events starts with the "abomination of desolation" (Mt 24:15, 21, 29-31), lasts for approximately 3 1/2 years (Dan 7:25; 9:27; 12:11; Rev 11:2-3; 12:6, 14; 13:5), and ends in nothing short of (1) Christ's glorious return (Mt 24:29-30), (2) the gathering of the elect (Mt 24:31; 2 Thes 2:1), (3) the final "deliverance" of Israel (the "thy people" Dan 12:1), and (4) the resurrection of the righteous dead (Dan 12:2). To place any of these events in past history is to ignore their manifest proximity to the resurrection (Dan 12:1-2 with Mt 24:21-31). However, preterists of the so-called "replacement" schools of prophetic interpretation (a-millennial, post-millennial, historical) are forced to deny the proximity of these events to a future resurrection.

Scholars agree that Dan 12:2 stands out as the most unambiguous reference to resurrection to be found anywhere in the OT. However, in order to avoid the implications of "apocalyptic futurism," preterists must interpret this otherwise clear reference to eternal resurrection as a non-literal metaphor standing for national revival (e.g. Ezek 37). But Daniel, who sees a prolonged exile, puts the unequalled tribulation and subsequent resurrection at "the end" (Dan 7:25-26; 8:17, 19; 9:27; 11:27, 35, 40; 12:1-13). This, however, provides no deterrent at all to preterism's postulate of two distinct ends to two distinct ages, i.e., the "Jewish age" and the "church age." But there is no analogy in Israel's history for such an end as these passages so definitely specify. Even if Daniel's reference to resurrection is interpreted figuratively, it cannot be separated in time from the unequalled tribulation which preterists interpret as literal. Clearly, Daniel's vision looks beyond any transitory national revival to the ultimate eschatological salvation "at the end of the days" (Dan 12:1-2, 13). According to Daniel, "Jacob's trouble" ends in the final deliverance of Israel and the resurrection of the righteous (Jer 30:7; Dan 12:1-2) which includes his own resurrection "at the end of the days" (Dan 12:13).

The exegetical force of this manifest interrelation of events is not lost on a minority of scholars that identify themselves as "consistent preterists" vis-à-vis "moderate preterists." However, rather than admitting a future fulfillment of this indivisible complex of events, "consistent preterists" feel justified in saying that the resurrection described in Daniel 12:2 is already past. This interpretation, however, contradicts the uniform witness of the NT. In virtually every text in the NT where the resurrection is mentioned, it is treated as an inseparable feature of the judgment that accompanies Christ's return at the still future "day of the Lord."

The time of the day of the Lord is made clear by noting that the stellar darkness that comes "immediately AFTER" the tribulation of those days (Mt 24:29) is shown in Acts 2:20 to precede and signal "the great and notable day of the Lord" (Joel 2:31; 3:14-16). So the darkness is "AFTER" the tribulation, but "BEFORE" the day of the Lord, showing that the great tribulation ends with the day of the Lord. The day of the Lord does not include the tribulation, but follows it. Thus the "thief-like" day of the Lord IS the post-tribulational advent of Christ (cf. Mt 24:43; 1 Thes 5:2; 2 Pet 3:10-12; Rev 16:14-15). However, a comparison of the following texts will show that the day of the Lord is consistently treated as marking the point of the Church's ultimate redemption (1 Cor 5:5; 2 Cor 1:14; 1 Thes 4:13-5:4; 2 Thes 1:7-10; 2:1-3, 8). These texts show that Christ's post-tribulational return cannot be separated from the day of the Lord, but neither can the day of the Lord be separated from the future hope of the church.

Only the strength of a powerfully overriding presupposition can account for the decision to make the post-tribulational coming described in the Olivet prophecy and in John's Apocalypse the exception to all other NT references to Christ's coming and attendant resurrection. In all other NT texts, the resurrection is united to the "blessed hope" of the Church. It is therefore the more curious that the only passages that are treated as exceptions happen to be those that make explicit or implicit prophetic reference to the Land of Israel. It is suggested that since the NT contains no clear reiteration of the land promise, this feature of "the everlasting covenant" (Ps 105:10-11; Jer 32:40-41; Ezek 37:25-26) has been reinterpreted as completely fulfilled in Jesus, and thus the Land no longer retains its former significance.

But NT witness to the abiding prophetic significance of the Land would not be so "missing" if the larger part of NT prophecy was not assigned to the past. Furthermore, it is not the New Testament's first interest to "reiterate" everything that Jews of the first century naturally understood as irrevocable features of the covenant (Jer 31:35-37; Ezek 36:22, 32; Ro 11:29), deferred only "UNTIL the times of restoration of all things" (Acts 3:21). Rather, the NT's emphasis falls on the revelation of things formerly hidden, bound up in the mystery of Christ's twofold advent. All that related to a future "restoration of the kingdom to Israel" was never in question (only "the times and seasons" Acts 1:6; 1 Thes 5:1-2), and required no special reaffirmation; it was self-evident.

The real question to be decided is what the exegetical and historical evidence is for how Jesus, Paul, and John, all apocalyptically oriented Jews of the first century, would have understood the relationship of Daniel's unequalled tribulation to the resurrection? Both "moderate" and "consistent" preterists insist that Christ returned mystically in apocalyptic judgment "immediately after the tribulation of those days" (Mt 24:19, 22, 29), understood as the days of the Roman sacking of Jerusalem. But while moderate preterists interpret Daniel's reference to a post-tribulational resurrection as a non-literal metaphor of past fulfillment, so-called "consistent preterists" go even further to say that living believers were translated and the dead in Christ actually rose around the time of Jerusalem's fall.

This is the price that "consistency" must pay if the time of unequalled tribulation is to be placed in the past. Such strained interpretations force themselves whenever the time of "unequalled tribulation" is placed in the past, simply because all exegetes are compelled to recognize the inseparable relationship of Daniel's reference to the resurrection in 12:2 with the "unequalled tribulation" that precedes it in 12:1. Among "moderate preterists," however, there is usually the belief of a future unsigned return of Christ and a general resurrection that is not to be identified with the resurrection that Daniel describes as ending the unequalled tribulation (12:1-2). But this is to forfeit consistency, as it divides the indivisible (2 Tim 2:15).

The manifest interrelation and indivisibility of the events described in the above parallel passages reveals a basic eschatology common to both testaments, viz., a last days' anti-Christ persecution of the saints followed by Christ's return as the glorified Son of Man to destroy the Antichrist, and resurrect the righteous. The same eschatological structure stands behind Paul's "little apocalypse" (2 Thes 2:1-12) and his comprehensive apologetic for the mystery of Israel's deferred salvation (Ro 9-11), since both prophetic scenarios assume as their goal the OT day of the Lord. For Paul, the "day of the Lord" marks the great transition point in history that God has appointed to remove Israel's partial blindness (Ro 11:25) and to re-engraft the "natural branches" into "their own" olive tree. This is also the time when the "deliverer" comes out of Zion to turn ungodliness away from Jacob (Ps 14:7; Joel 3:16; Isa 59:18-21; Ro 11:26-27).

Thus, at the moment of Christ's return the Antichrist is destroyed (2 Thes 2:8), the Church is raptured (cf. Mt 24:31; 1 Thes 4:13-5:4; 2 Thes 2:1; 1 Cor 15:51-52), and a nation is "born in one day" (Isa 66:8; Ezek 39:22; Zech 3:9), as the surviving remnant of Israel in penitent contrition "shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourns for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn" (Zech 12:10 with Mt 23:39; 24:30; Rev 1:7).

Until then, the blinded nation (Israel) is subject to the "vengeance of the covenant" (Lev 26:25; Isaiah 10:6; Lk 21:22-23). Therefore, whether in or outside the Land, Israel must continue to pass under the rod UNTIL (Lk 21:24; Acts 3:21; Ro 11:25-29) final deliverance and new covenant transformation comes at the post-tribulational day of the Lord (Jer 31:31-37; 32:37-42; Ezek 36:26; 39:22-29; Joel 3:21). Until "that day," God's face remains hidden from the larger nation (see Ezek 39:22-29), as the people of the unfulfilled covenant are delivered over to tribulation and flight (Mt 24:16; Rev 12:6), and the land, cities and holy places to desolations (Lev 26:31-32; Isa 10:5-6; 63:18; 64:10-11; Ezek 36:35-36; Mt 24:15; Lk 21:20).

This is the uniform perspective that becomes unmistakable in Jesus's, Paul's and John's parallel use of Daniel. For all that the "secret" of NT revelation (Ro 16:25-26) adds to the glory of God's eternal purpose, it does not

nothing to alter the essential framework of OT eschatology. Though so much concerning the ground of the eternal covenant in Christ's atonement and twofold advent has come to light in the revelation of the mystery, Paul is unable to conceive of the covenant's final vindication in history apart from the "salvation of all Israel" at the day of the Lord (Jer 31:34; Isa 59:17-21; Ro 11:26).

In both testaments, the day of the Lord marks the point of ultimate divine deliverance that divides "this present evil age" (the times of the Gentiles) from "the age to come" that begins with Christ's post-tribulational return to destroy the Antichrist (cf. Dan 7:11, 21-24; 11:31-12:1; 2 Thes 2:2-4, 8; Rev 16:13-16; 19:20; also Dan 2:44 with Rev 17:12 in light of Acts 1:6; 3:21). This is the pivotal point where the eschatology of both testaments converge. Even if a case can be made for the occurrence of a double, archetypal, or partial fulfillment of certain of the more "apocalyptic" expressions of NT prophecy, one has still to contend with the NT's continued treatment of the day of the Lord as a yet future event.

A later spiritual application or enlargement of an OT prophecy does not nullify or preclude a future literal fulfillment that meets all the demands of context and original authorial intention, particularly when the still future "day of the Lord" is its stated time of fulfillment. By what logic, then, can any presume that the future day of the Lord may not bring with it the great turning from ungodliness on the part of the "natural branches" that Paul so clearly confesses in complete agreement with the entire eschatology of the OT? And if this much is true, what part of OT prophecy may not be interpreted literally? Such a wholesale overhaul of "Jewish eschatology" (disdainfully referred to as "carnalistic" and "carnal") is based on unjustified presuppositions that must rule out a future post-tribulational coming of the Son of Man to change believers, raise the dead, and deliver Israel all according to the mystery traced by Paul in Ro 9-11.

All that is new to the eschatology of the NT is what has issued out of the mystery of Messiah's twofold advent (the mystery of the kingdom). By this foretold but no less unexpected turn of events, a new tension was created that theologians, borrowing a famous term from Oscar Cullman's "Christ and Time," refer to as "the already and the not yet." Theologians of the so-called "Heilsgeschichte" school of NT interpretation also subscribe to a kind of "middle-view" among scholars called "inaugurated eschatology." It is basically the idea that in Christ, and through the spirit of revelation, "the powers of the coming age" (Heb 6:5) have invaded the present, thus the title of George Ladd's "The Presence of the Future." It means that the decisive eschatological visitation has come in an unexpected advance of the day of the Lord, creating a new center, and this new center is the hallmark of all NT eschatology. "The already" is the "inaugurated" kingdom as first-fruits; "the not yet" is the kingdom's fuller conquest that comes with Christ's return, the yet awaited "day of the Lord." The kingdom is both here and coming, as also the powers of the "approaching day" (Heb 10:25). This means that the revelation of the mystery does nothing to nullify the necessary "not yet" of all that waits the still future "day of the Lord," nor does it justify a sweeping "reinterpretation" of any of the events and ends attained only with its still awaited arrival. An overly "realized eschatology" is as unbiblical as an overly "futurized" eschatology that fails to emphasize the power and presence of the kingdom that has come and is still coming.

Thus, the logic of Preterism is clear: Since the tribulation described in Daniel and the Olivet prophecy is past, and since it is without dispute that Jesus returns in glory "immediately after the tribulation," it follows that Christ has in some sense already returned. But according to the parallel passage in Daniel, if the tribulation is past, then so is the resurrection (12:1-2). But if the tribulation (depicted as brief, unequalled, and age ending) is not past, it is future; and a future tribulation that has its inception in the Land (Dan 11:41-45; Mt 24:16; Lk 21:24; Rev 11:2; 14:20; 16:16) carries all kinds of implications for the prophetic future of Israel.

One might even wonder if a latent anti-Semitic triumphalism is not the real attraction of Preterism. This is perhaps more possible than we are prepared to conceive. Both scripture and history attest to a deep and powerful natural aversion to God's electing prerogatives, and this is particularly exposed when it comes to the question of the Jew in history and prophecy. However, given the amazing story of the modern return of the Jews to a revived national existence that seemed to rise out of the ashes of the Holocaust, together with the ominous portents implicit in the ensuing Middle East crisis, it would appear that history is being positioned for the "literal" fulfillment of prophecy.

Indeed, it is hard to see how any objective observer could possibly disregard the prophetic futurism implicit in Zechariah's amazing prophecy that depicts the final world crisis as centered upon the question of Jerusalem (Zech 12:2). This is precisely what we see on the world stage. Jerusalem is now and will increasingly become "a cup of trembling" destined to sift all nations. The "controversy of Zion" represents the great issues of covenant and election, and the sovereignty of the divine rule manifest through prophecy (Isa 46:10; Rev 19:10b). Indeed, the entire eschatology of Daniel is built around an age enduring war against "the holy covenant" (11:28, 30) led by an invisible host of "princi-

palities and powersâ€™™ (4:17 ; 8:11 , 13, 25; 9:25 -26; 10:12 -21; 11:18 , 22, 12:1).

Therefore, according to the eschatology of both testaments, the final provocation of divine wrath comes in response to a n ultimate arrogance of the nations against the covenant, particularly as it touches the question of the Jew and the Land (cf. Joel 3:2 ; Ezek 38:16-19; Dan 11:39; Zech 12:2 ; Mt 24:15-16). This is the eschatological context in which the gospe I was first preached â€œfor a witnessâ€™™ to all nations; it must be so again (Mt 24:14 with Rev 19:10 b). The first disciple s lived under the shadow of an imminent, age-ending judgment of Jerusalem .

We have come full circle!

(R. Kelly)

Re: Which Generation Shall Not Pass Until All Be Fulfilled? - posted by docs (), on: 2018/4/15 15:50

Question:

I have a question that I think goes along with this discussion. I have had the opportunity to talk back and forth with a lead er in Preterism, as much to learn about as anything. A lot of the debate over the future of the events verses them being past relates to the passage that makes reference to â€œthis generation.â€ I asked how can it be past considering the s tate of Israel as a nation continuing in unbelief. To which he admits difficulty and has to spiritualize a lot of things but clin gs to how can it not be past? Jesus and the Apostles would be wrong and liars bc it must be, they must be the â€œthis generation.â€ My question is, from my understanding of Acts 1:6-8 that the Apostles related the return of Christ and the restoration of the physical Kingdom to the Jews as happening at the same event. Jesus never reproves them, and they have been talking for 40 days about the Kingdom so I perceive they have some knowledge of it before they ask. Now, to me how can one claim that these events are past? The amount of things that have to be spiritualized as being somethin g found in the Church seem far to great?

REPLY:

Iâ€™™ve written something on this already. I probably should write much more on it and hope to soon, but I will send that earlier email on this topic, and it can at least serve as a start (see below). Weâ€™™ll talk about this when youâ€™™re here, but youâ€™™ve tapped into one of the thorniest problems in all the study of prophecy. And while I believe your friend has made the mistake of supposing that the alternatives that heâ€™™s so far considered are the only ones that exist, I can als o sympathize and appreciate why he feels he has to interpret the tribulation as past, lest Jesus be represented as mistak en or in error, which would be disastrous, of course. This problem has been greatly exploited by atheists and liberal theo logians to argue that Jesus, in His â€œhumanityâ€™™, expected to return soon in connection with Jerusalemâ€™™s immine nt destruction, but the â€œpassing awayâ€ of that generation proved Him wrong in His expectation. On the part of thos e that have a semblance of evangelical reverence for the Lordâ€™™s authority as a prophet, and for the authority of script ure, solutions have been proposed in at least four directions, and Iâ€™™ll try to cover those alternative views during your visit.

Where does such a process of spiritualization stop?

Hereâ€™™s a copy of that earlier email where part of your question is partly covered:

Hi Mark, Yes, I did not go into the â€œgenerationâ€™™ question in my article. I guess you could say, that from their perspe ctive, thatâ€™™s â€œourâ€™™ Achillesâ€™™ heel. Still, my thesis stands; if one is willing to spiritualize the post-tribulational coming of Jesus in the Olivet prophecy, then to be consistent, the resurrection in Daniel 12:1-2 must be spiritualized by t he same rule, because both events follow the unequaled tribulation. But then where does such a process of spiritualizati on stop?

In my â€œAchilles heelâ€™™ article I tried to show that when you put the tribulation in the past so that â€œall these thing sâ€ can be fulfilled within the lifetime of the disciples (â€œthis generationâ€™™), the preterist is forced to posit a mystical r eturn of Christ. This alleged coming is understood in terms of an invisible return in judgment via the Roman siege of Jeru salem. But I pointed out that if the tribulation is interpreted as past, then one is forced to subject the resurrection of Dan 12:2 to the same spiritualization, since it, no less than the coming of Mt 24:29-31, comes after the tribulation (compare D an 12:1-2 with Mt 24:21, 29). Not only this, but a host of OT passages show that the time of unequaled distress conclude s with nothing less than the â€œday of the Lordâ€™™, which is the transition point that realizes all the goals of the covenan ts of promise. All of this is dissolved if the tribulation is past, so it is no wonder that a vast volume of prophetic material m

ust be sweepingly re-interpreted and spiritualized on such an assumption.

Such a process has no clear stopping point, as it requires not only the spiritualization, but the separation and re-allocation of many associated events, as for example the resurrection, the second coming, the day of the Lord, and the "end of the age". I think the only reason that Sproul embraced preterism is because it seemed to him the only alternative to making Christ a false prophet. He said as much in the intro to his book on Christ's return. He believes that Christ's statement that "this generation shall not pass away till all these things are fulfilled" is incapable of being understood in any other way than the lifetime of the Lord's contemporaries. This is the power of preterism among many otherwise orthodox evangelicals. The choice between past fulfillment or failed prediction has been a powerful inducement for many to turn to preterism. No neo-orthodox theologian would be guilty of such strained spiritualizing, but then liberal scholars have no trouble concluding that Jesus simply erred in His expectation that He would return within the lifetime of His disciples.

Here's what happens: A conservative evangelical believer such as Sproul becomes aware of the use that liberal and neo-orthodox critics have made of this passage and other seemingly related passages (such as "some standing here shall not taste death" etc.) in the synoptic gospels. They see the use to which these passages have been put by atheists to argue for the failure of prophecy. They see also what they regard as inadequate attempts at explanation by futurists such as Hal Lindsey, Walvoord etc. This makes them prime candidates for the appeal of preterism, which provides for a tribulation that is past by understanding Christ's post-tribulational coming as a mystical return in the form of an age ending judgment on Jerusalem, described poetically in the same kind of "apocalyptic imagery" that the OT uses to describe other historical judgments on nations, or so it is argued. They then turn to Josephus as a first century historian recording many of the general phenomena (wars, earthquakes etc.) associated with the "end" as described in the Olivet prophecy, and understood as the "end" of Jerusalem and the "Jewish age". This is how they build their case, but their motive can be noble. They are apologists for the faith, and do not want to concede any ground to unbelief. Therefore, they are naturally attracted to preterism. They fall prey to what some have called "the black and white fallacy," which assumes that the alternatives so far considered are the only ones that exist. This creates the danger of a false choice.

There may also be motives that are not so noble, as in the case of those that resent God's royal prerogative to elect unconditionally, and this can take its toll on the attitude of some towards Israel in particular, making it all too convenient to conceive of a conclusion to the age that omits any special purpose of God towards Israel as a nation of destiny. Unless his position has changed, Sproul does look for the re-engraftment of a great number of natural Israel at the end of the age, disclaiming knowledge of the particulars of how or when (I wish I had his ear).

So in coming to the passage that says "Truly I say to you, this generation shall not pass away till all these things shall be fulfilled," I must preface what I think to be at work here by reminding us of the New Testament concept of God's use of mystery as a two edged sword affecting both salvation and judgment. If we trace not only the word "mystery" but the related terms and concepts throughout the NT, it will appear that God's secrets are reserved to His sovereign initiative, and are divinely calculated to stumble pride and also to wage a war of strategy against the principalities and powers. He is a God that hides Himself (Isa 45:15). God's mystery is shut up among His own (Isa 8:14-17), but to those without, it is hidden for the purpose of judgment (Mk 4:11-12).

Can we conceive that God would use deliberate measures to protect His secret from pride? Where this characteristic of God's use of mystery is unacknowledged, the solution that I will propose will seem as foul play. But I believe that God fully designs to speak and act in ways that are sure to confound the pride of carnal confidence. I see this as characterizing the whole ministry of Christ, particularly His puzzling commands to silence. There could have been no mystery at all if the divine intention had been so unmistakably spelled out in prophecy as some suggest; but it wasn't (1Pet 1:11), not because God was unable to reveal everything in advance, but because it was not His intention to reveal "the mystery of His will" before the time. In the same way, it was not His intention that Christ simply explain the mystery contained in the prophetic writings concerning His two advents. He knew the secret, but was not at liberty to reveal it before the time ("tell no man till I do"). Why? One reason was for the sake of judgement on the wisdom of this age (see 1Cor 1:21 with 2:8).

So God is out to stumble pride as its own self-inflicted judgment. The means and measures by which this is accomplished is another conversation, but one thing is clear, God's selective mode of revelation will always raise problems for natural reason that will defy solution by mere brain power regardless of exegetical skills. It is the humility of repentance that clears the way for the entrance of light (but then again repentance is also the result of revelation as seen in the case of Paul and the future remnant of Israel; Zech 12:10). I make this point because it explains what I think underlies the large

r purpose of the Father in Jesus's use of the term "generation". I am suggesting that Jesus well knew the versatility of the language and that it would be a potential source of perplexity.

Jesus well knew the versatility of this term, as evident from his unique and profound use of it in His rebuke of the Pharisees in the preceding chapter. The confrontation with the Pharisees in chapt 23 sets the stage and context for what follows on the same day in the Olivet prophecy. In Mt 23:29-36 Jesus describes a phenomenon that is far too little considered in biblical theology. It is what some have called "corporate solidarity." Jesus cites the self-assured boast of the Pharisees, "If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets," as proof that His contemporaries are in the same generational line of those that slew the prophets. It is THIS GENERATION that remains in an unbroken continuum "until YOU shall say blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord" (Mt 23:39). The day of national repentance ends the age enduring opposition of "this generation."

More than an issue of mere bloodline, the concept of generation represents a particular spiritual disposition or nature. So long as this perversity of spirit and God rejection persists in the Jewish nation, so does the exile continue, and so does "this generation" remain; it only ends when "all these things" shall be fulfilled. This is consistent with the use of the term in Moses and the prophets (Deut 32:5, 20 et al), in John Baptist, and it was Stephen's use of the same essential indictment, if not the precise term, that cost him his life (Acts 7:51-52; cf. also 1Thes 2:16).

Notice the Lord's unique use of "you" in His indictment. It is the same in Stephen's apologetic. It is the generic "you" of corporate solidarity, hence an abiding generation. It is a generation that does not escape judgment, regardless of its particular location in chronological time, "UNTIL". This is why Jesus could speak of a future day of public acknowledgment of His messianic dignity, and describes it in terms of the generational "until YOU will say." It is why He could indict His own contemporaries as present in the killing of the prophets in the very persons of their fathers ("whom you slew"). And it is why Zechariah can speak particularly of the last generation of Jewish survivors of the last tribulation as "looking on Him whom THEY have pierced," as though they were the actual historical murderers of the Messiah. And they were; because they performed it in the persons of their Jewish forebears. Thus, the surviving remnant of Jacob's trouble will see themselves as part of an ongoing generation, the generation that has always resisted the Spirit and slain the prophets. This, of course, assumes a powerful revelation, but we believe that such revelation will be amply communicated through the witness of the tribulation church. This witness, though very powerful, will not at first prevail to turn the larger part of the remnant to faith, but it will be the effectual seed that the Lord will quicken at the moment of His appearing, "when the Deliverer comes out of Zion to turn ungodliness from Jacob." Only then will they "look on Me whom they pierced."

Finally, and here I go back to the amazing way that God hides His mysteries. It has always been striking to me that immediately after Jesus says "this generation shall not PASS AWAY till all these things be fulfilled," He then most significantly adds: "Heaven and earth shall PASS AWAY, but My Word shall never PASS AWAY." I believe that Jesus well knew and even anticipated how that "that" generation would appear to pass without the fulfillment of "all these things." I believe it is precisely because He knew that His words would be pointed to by the gainsayer as evidence of the failure of prophecy that He adds the revelatory caveat that sooner would heaven and earth PASS AWAY than one jot or tittle of His word to fail or fall to the ground. Impossible! So by divine design, we are left with a choice of faith, but this need not require a choice between the false alternatives of a spiritualizing preterism or unbelief concerning the Lord's prophetic accuracy.

Yours in the Beloved,
Reggie Kelly

Re: You slew the 14 people who are preterists. - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2018/5/2 19:27

Preterism and Post millennialism seem to walk together, There are partial preterists too, and they comprise about 10 people. Only the reformed camp seems to have a very few that go the preterist route, I wouldn't spend too much energy on it, there's only about 14 folks out there who are full preterists...and they're closet one's to boot.

Im just exaggerating the numbers, but its a really small group and their influence to gain adherents is not very large.

Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2018/5/2 19:34

"One might even wonder if a latent anti-Semitic triumphalism is not the real attraction of Preterism"
Kelly's quote.

I wouldn't say Anti-Semitic, but I would say replacement theology emphasizes the gentile Church in such a way that the Jews are merely the clean up or anti-climax of the Gentile era.

Such a view is repugnant to me.

Re: generation gap is soon approaching - posted by savannah, on: 2018/5/3 11:23

This generation is so impatient!

So...with that said...I'll get back to you on this soon!

I just need to quickly get my notes together.

Thanks for waiting patiently,

Savannah