

The Cambrian Pesher

A Voice of the Desposyni to the Dispersion

Feast of the Seven Trumpets (October, 2022)

Anno Domini: In the Year of our Lord, 100,000
(99,997 AD *vulgaris*)*

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end . . .

- Isaiah 9:7

Beloved Friends:

Let me begin with an abstract.

Abstract

The following represents what the author calls the Soteriological Model of Eschatology which is an irenic resolution of the Preterist, Historicist and Idealist Schools of Bible prophecy. Relying upon the Pesher and Targumist interpreters found in the writings of the Dead Sea Scrolls and elsewhere, and then the hermeneutical principles found in the writings of scholars such as Isaac Newton's Observations on Daniel & the Apocalypse, this writer argues that the Bible declares its prophetic language to be allegorical. It is not meant to be interpreted with a literalism demanded by religious Fundamentalists, although it does have literal applications. The General Resurrection as understood by historic Christianity is an event which occurs at the end of history, after a long period of human propagation and colonization of God's creation, lasting "a thousand generations" as an advancement of the Messianic Kingdom. The Messianic Kingdom in Desposynic doctrine is a propagation and expansion of the Messianic family, the actual physical descendants of Jesus Christ who as the Last Adam has "broken the power of cancelled sin." God's Great Eschatons are judgment events in history which both discipline and empower God's righteous remnant to the task of the messianic calling. The next Eschaton will be a cosmic fulfillment of the final Feast of Ingathering, which ends in the sounding of the seventh trumpet and heralds what is known to Christianity as "the Millennial Kingdom."

On Gazing into Heaven

Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

- Acts 1:11

I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven . . . And there was given him dominion, glory, and a kingdom . . .

- Daniel 7:13-14

Suppose you were in the crowd on the Mount of Olives at the time of Christ's Ascension, and suppose you were standing there just as the two messengers told that sacred assembly that Jesus would come back again someday. Also suppose you had inside knowledge and knew that Jesus would not come back for 2,000 years - what would you have done? Would you have said anything?

Would it have been impious for you to have said something, knowing that it was true that Christ would not return neither in their generation nor in two thousand years?

If not, is it impious to suggest in our time today, that Christ may not return for another 100,000 years?

It is the standard interpretation that we are not to know the time of his coming because it might engender sloth: "My lord delayeth his coming" (Matthew 24:48). Jesus said more than once that "the day nor the hour knoweth no man except the Father in heaven."

What has changed, then? If the disciples truly believed that the second coming would happen in their lifetimes, why didn't it?

And why would it not be now in our generation?

Exegetical Conundrums

When one analyzes the above text from Acts, we find a logical discontinuity which is typical of prophetic language in the Bible. If, as the angels said, Christ would return "in the same manner as you have seen him go into heaven," then the disciples immediately acted in a counter-intuitive manner: they abandoned the site as if Jesus was not coming back. Meaning, if Jesus was really going to come back "any day" to the Mount of Olives, you would think that the disciples would have constructed a shrine or monument which would have been staffed with a permanent delegation to welcome Jesus upon His return. As in any diplomatic mission, the receiving nation always has a state dignitary and entourage to welcome an ambassador upon his arrival and escort him to the head of state for an audience. The fact that the disciples abandoned the site seems to have been the opposite of what logic would demand, but also contrary to the teachings of Jesus who commanded them, elsewhere, to "Watch, for you know not when your Lord

cometh." A good watchman does not abandon his post. If the Mount of Olives was meant to be the site of a literal, physical return of Christ, a faithful servant would have kept vigil at the site for his lord's return.

My Old Dog Duke

Many years ago, I had a dog that did that very thing. My family's farm was land-locked because of an easement dispute which barred vehicular access to the property. I had to walk a mile through the woods to get to it. I left my dog there because I pastured sheep on the farm and I needed his watchful care. I discovered that he would wait for me at the fence-line and each day would be there when I returned the next day at the spot where I left him the night before. He did that day after day for months until I was able to move to the property. He was the best dog I ever owned; he had a degree of loyalty that touches my heart to this day.

You can understand why it is hard for me to believe that Jesus is coming back to a place that has been abandoned by His followers.

[Personal Note: And just to enlighten the reader's curiosity, I think my dog Duke did his job protecting the sheep. I think he could hear the distinctiveness of my car's engine, even from a mile in the woods, so that by the time I walked to the property line, he beat me to it and was waiting for me, as if he had been there the whole time.]

The Great Commission

I can only surmise that the disciples understood the angels to mean something entirely different from what their words actually implied: namely, that Jesus was *not* going to come back for a long while and that it would be a waste of time to stand there waiting for Him. Something else had to happen first, something they were instructed by Jesus to do, and then, only after that, would He come back. He had told them to go to Jerusalem "to receive power" so they could be "witnesses" in fulfilling the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). They understood the Ascension in the meaning as conveyed by Daniel's prophecy cited above, and implied by the text below which describes what happened after Jesus disappeared into the clouds, and then, as Daniel says, "he approached the Ancient of Days." It was the time, not of Christ's departure, but of His enthronement:

So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

- Mark 16:19

We are told by the Church Fathers that the Gospel of Mark was John Mark's compilation of notes from Peter's sermons and reminiscences. Whether the closing verses were the actual words of Peter or whether they represent Mark's editorializing doesn't matter: the New Testament Church believed the coming of Christ had to be preceded by the fulfillment of certain conditions. As delineated elsewhere in my writings (*Hope for Tomorrow: A Rebuttal of Apocalyptic Determinism*, 1983), a long period of "disciplining the

nations" was to occur until God's will was done "on earth, as it is in heaven." The Great Commission involves far more than merely evangelism; it involves Christian reconstruction of all human institutions.

The Covenant as Prophecy

To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

- Isaiah 8:20

The Christian religion teaches us that the Bible is an account of the human condition and God's plan of redemption. It begins with a pristine creation which is pronounced "very good" by the Creator and then continues with the moral failure of his appointed vicegerent. All in the first chapters of Genesis, the remainder of the Bible is a sometimes convoluted account of a redemptive plan to restore creation to its original pristine condition: a plan proceeding through the centuries of the biblical patriarchs, the tribal kingdoms of Israel, the jeremaids of their prophets, the rise of empires, then finally with the story of Jesus Christ and his followers.

Within this plan of redemption there exists a linkage of various covenants which God makes with the leading actors of the redemption story. The linkage creates a continuity in the biblical narrative which gives explanation of the past and provides prophecy for the future.

The Doctrine of the Covenants found among the Hebrews and Christians stands in stark contrast with the **Doctrine of Fates** as taught by the pagans, of which the tales of Greek mythology illustrate. The Doctrine of Covenants divides the human race into covenant keepers and covenant breakers. The "covenants" are usually contained in a Divine directive (much like a suzerain treaty), in which vicegerents are appointed to perform certain tasks of rule according to specified instructions. Sanctions are delineated for obedience and disobedience. The most elaborate expression of that covenant is the Mosaic Law.

In contrast, the Greek Doctrine of Fates presents a chaotic universe in which there is a war of the gods, with man caught in the middle of their capricious devices. In the Greek pantheon, as was true of all pagan cultures, man's adversity was caused, not necessarily by man's own moral failure, but by the ill-tempered and short-sightedness of their own deities.

Understandably, prophecy was taught in riddles by the seers of these ancient cults to reflect the tenuousness of this situation.

The biblical prophets, on the other hand, explained the cause and effect of covenantal sanctions. Calamity from war, pestilence, and famine - all could be traced to an

extended period of specific disobedience and the failure to repent of it. Consequently, prophecy did not serve the purpose of satisfying a man's curiosity about his future, but rather of a warning for covenant breaking.

God Changes His Mind

And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.

- Jonah 3:10

We see this starkly presented in the story of Jonah. He is the prophet remembered, of course, for the fish story, but the central message of the book is not his miraculous survival in the belly of the whale for three days: it was that he was commanded to prophecy a specific, unequivocal telic prophecy that the city of Ninevah would be destroyed "in 40 days." He did so, the city responded with repentance, and God withdrew the sentence, thus discrediting the prophet. That was the "moral" of the story: the warning of the prophets is offered to induce repentance and moral redemption, not to seal the recipients to their doom.

From this story, we learn, as says the Apostle, that "God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"(2 Peter 3:9). This is the foundation of what can be called the "Soteriological Model" of Bible prophecy: the belief that **prophecy is a component in the message of redemption**. "Salvation" (as is meaning of the Greek *soter*) is the primary purpose of prophecy. Prophetic language is simply the description and anticipation of moral government.

God can change His mind in reference to the enforcement of moral law. It is a prerogative of sovereignty, but it is never arbitrary. Even in the Book of Revelation, where the interpreter might think that the calamities which befall mankind are the callous blows from an indifferent, even hostile, Creator, the text tells us that the plagues come upon mankind's failure to repent, and escalate, as did the plagues of Egypt, because they have hardened their hearts (16:9 *et al*).

In contrast, the notion of "apocalyptic determinism" is a belief in which a predetermined timetable has been established to human actions, world events, and Divine judgment. It comes perilously close to the Doctrine of Fates mentioned above. There is nothing you can do to alter your destiny. And like the pagan prophets, human action to evade fate is anticipated by the gods. One of the favorite scenarios of pagan prophecy is the idea that the very act of evasion is the thing which traps you to your fate. The prophecies lure the recipient into a course of action which in itself becomes the cause of his demise. For example, a Greek hero might be predicted to kill his own father. The hero seeks to avoid a scenario in which that might happen, but the gods may cause the father to experience shape-shifting into a stag, in which case our Greek hero, hunting for food, might kill it only to find afterwards that it was his father in disguise.

These stories might make for interesting reading, but to the First Christians, they would have been horrified at its reflection on God's moral character.

On this score, the doctrine of the Fatherhood of God becomes the decisive factor in separating the God of the Bible from the gods of pagan mythology. In one context, Jesus Christ warned his disciples that men will kill them, thinking "they do God's service." He says this is possible because they do not "know the Father." It is not enough to merely believe in God as a "higher power," a potentate, or an offended despot. One must believe in His *fatherhood*, that His relationship is one of beneficence, as one "who rewards those who diligently seek him." If a society believes in the Fatherhood of God, then it will believe in the brotherhood of man. The failure of Christian teachers to offer a relational theology and social theory founded upon the Fatherhood of God and a familial model of the doctrine of the Trinity will, in time, corrupt the Christian religion and eventually erode society as a whole.

The Cult of Literalism

I was in the spirit on the Lord's day. - Revelation 1:10

The words I speak, they are spirit and they are life. - John 6:63

Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

- 2 Corinthians 5:16

Fundamentalists take great satisfaction in the belief that they interpret the Bible "literally." This insistence upon a textual literalism, of course, is specious reasoning.

First, literalism can lead to absurdities, as in the examples we have cited in the past. Jesus Christ is not a woolly, four-legged creature simply because the Scriptures call him "the lamb of God." Fundamentalists recognize and concede this but in doing so, they fail to reason why this is so. How is it that it is *reducto ad absurdum* to argue that Christ is literally a sheep? It is because we understand through the ***historical narrative*** that Jesus was actually a man. A man is not a sheep. However, we also know that poetically speaking, a man can be referred to as a "sacrificial lamb" because his death is put in the place of others, so that others might live. The metaphor draws upon the doctrine of atonement as it was understood by the ancients.

Second, literalism must not prevent the Bible from interpreting itself. For example, when Jesus gave His cannibalism speech in John Chapter 6 and invited His disciples to "eat of my flesh and drink of my blood" that they might experience eternal life, when He perceived that they did not understand what He was talking about, He explained openly, as cited above, that His words were "spirit and they are life."

This is an important term in the Scriptures. **When a prophet or apostle tells us that something is seen "in the spirit" it is a clue for us to understand that everything which follows is meant to be interpreted as metaphor. Some scholars call this process "spiritualizing" the text.**

But that is not an accurate characterization. The Gnostics were the original "spiritualizers" who tried to allegorize the narrative and preceptive portions of the Scriptures which were not meant to be interpreted symbolically.

For example, as modern Bible "code" decrypters do today, the Gnostics would take a simple narrative statement in the Bible and read it as a code. When the Gospel accounts tell us that Jesus went to Jericho, or Galilee, or Jerusalem, the presumption should be to accept the text as a literal account of His movements. "Jericho" in the Gospel narratives is not code for Qumran. Yet, the Gnostics were forever "decoding" the biblical texts this way.

The Gnostics did the same with not only the historical narratives but they inverted the values of the preceptive portions, as well. They believed that the God of the Old Testament was an evil God. All of the figures denounced in the Old Testament, such as Cain, were regarded as heroes because they were opposing the evil "demiurge." If this evil God forbade the ingestion of blood, for instance, then the Gnostics regarded it as liberating to consume it.

Gnosticism is proto-satanism and the dalliances of modern Evangelicals with Gnostic thinking, such as antinomianism, and the substitution of righteous living with the "gifts of the spirit" have become the slippery slope which has led to the modern avalanche of cultism and witchcraft.

What it really means to be "in the spirit"?

Modern charismatics think this expression "in the spirit" is meant to be interpreted as somekind of trance or altered state of consciousness. That is not its primary meaning, as Jesus said in John 5.. Yet even if we concede that "in the spirit" refers to a vision, the vision itself anticipates something seen in symbolic form. In the Book of Acts, we are told that St. Peter was "in a trance" in Chapter 10, in which he saw a vision of a sheet full of unclean creatures descending from heaven and a voice which commanded him to kill and eat. Peter interpreted the vision as a metaphor to mean that he should not call the Gentiles "unclean" and unworthy of salvation.

To illustrate this further, John the Revelator tells us that he was "in the spirit on the Lord's Day" (i.e. the day of the Lord - 1:10). He is telling us that everything which follows in his visions must be interpreted as a symbol for something else. The lampstands, the angelic beings, the monsters, the beasts in heaven and the beasts on earth and the beasts of the sea, the trumpets, the vials, it all must be interpreted as symbols. And lest we stray into an inordinate fascination with the imagery, from time to time, he reminds us that it is all symbolic. When we see a seven-headed dragon capturing a third of the

stars of heaven, John tells us that these stand for a political power, not even necessarily angelic beings. When locusts arise from the "bottomless pit" - try to imagine such a thing - he tells us that these represent the armies of this satanic kingdom. When we begin to think that he is describing some future mythical age, he reminds us that this kingdom was contemporary to his time: the city where Christ was crucified (11:8) and one which "rules over the kingdoms of men" (17:18).

In proper exegetical context, even the stars are men, not angels, as in Joseph's vision of his brothers (Genesis 37:9) and Daniel's vision of the fallen "host" (8:10) who had become covenant breakers ("the transgressors" 8:23) from among the "holy people" (8:24).

Since men are called angels (e.g. Matthew 11:10) and angels are called men (e.g. Acts 1:10), it is not out of character for men to be called stars also in biblical symbolism: Genesis 15:5 *et al*, Numbers 24:17; Judges 5:20; Daniel 12:3; and Jude 13, which reads:

Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

To gain a context and working back from this verse to discover who Jude was talking about: these "wandering stars" are called "spots in your agape feasts" in the previous verse; "them" in verse 11 who have gone the "way of Cain"; "brute beasts" in v. 10; "filthy dreamers" in v. 8; sodomites in v. 7; fallen "angels" in v. 6; unbelievers in v. 5, and finally, most importantly "certain men" in verse 4 who were "of old ordained" and "ungodly men." In other words, with all of the metaphors, Jude is talking about *human actors*, and even the "angels which kept not their first estate" - which some have supposed to be a reference somehow to the *nephilim* of Genesis 6 - is not talking about heavenly beings, but human "messengers" (*aggelos*) or preachers who have turned "the grace of God into lasciviousness and [denied] the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 5).

[In another Peshier on "The Lord's Sanhedrin," we have identified Michael the archangel as a pesher for Jesus Christ who contends with "the devil" (the Herodian High Priest) over the "body of Moses": the Jewish Sanhedrin. Thus, even verse 9 follows this demythologized interpretation of the pesher.]

But there is more.

Are the Literalists Apostates?

As Jude elucidates further on these evil men, he tells us that they are known for their "hard speeches" (v. 15) and calls them "murmurers" and "complainers" (v. 16). The Greek for "hard" speeches here is *skleros* #4642 which means "dry, hard, tough" as something which has become "stiff or inflexible." We get the medical term "arteriosclerosis" as in "hardening of the arteries" from this word.

"Hard speech" is characteristic of murmurers who demand the fulfillment of what they imagine are neglected contractual obligations. Even to this day, lawsuits are initiated by a "complaint." Thus, the inflexibility of the "complainer" and "murmurer" is an unyielding literalism.

Christ's disciples in John 6 were offended at His "hard saying" because they wanted to interpret his words literally and not be burdened with the task of deciphering allegorical language. They accused Him of teaching cannibalism. They were unwilling to accept that He was speaking to them in metaphor. They were trying to find fault with His teaching methods.

St. Peter calls attention to these same kinds of people who wanted to interpret St. Paul's writings in a literal way, and because of that inflexibility, made shipwreck of their faith:

As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

- 2 Peter 3:16

It is not necessarily a virtue to insist upon a literal interpretation of the Bible. In fact, Jesus explained to His disciples that teaching in parables was His *modus operandi* to weed out "the dull of hearing" lest they "should be converted and I should heal them" (Matthew 13:10-16).

Literalism and Subversion

Jude identifies three aspects of this apostasy of literalism:

Woe unto them! for they have gone the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. v. 11

First, of course, as delineated in my other writings (*The Seed of Cain & the Revival of Mystic Humanism*, 1987), "the way of Cain" is the path of secular humanism, as the Scripture says: "And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD" (Genesis 4:16).

Cain's apostasy began with His complaint against the justice of God and a self-righteousness that justified murder.

Second, we have the "error of Balaam" which was his counsel to Israel's enemies to attack Israel with doctrines of antinomianism: specifically, he counseled King Balak to send the Moabite women into the Israelite camp to seduce the men. Fornication would defeat Israel's invincibility because God would withdraw His supernatural assistance. The Holy Spirit did not allow Baalam to curse Israel; so to presumptuously circumvent God's manifested will, he used his inside knowledge of God's law – a literalism - to subvert the covenants (Numbers 22-25).

Finally, the "gainsaying of Kora" is not a story so well known. It is found in Numbers 16 where we discover rebels against Moses arguing for a "priesthood of believers" doctrine to supplant his authority:

Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD? 16:3

The complaint of Kora and his allies concerned itself with a belief that Moses acted with duplicity:

Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us? Moreover, thou hast not brought us into a land that floweth with milk and honey, or given us inheritance . . . 16:13-14

In these instances cited by Jude, **literalism is used for purposes of subversion**. All parents experience this rebellion in teenagers who challenge them with "But you said..." In adults the practice is more sinister and dangerous.

In the Epistle of Jude, who was Desposyni and among the Lord's brethren and writing in the post-apostolic era (the period just after the martyrdom of Peter and Paul and just before the fall of Jerusalem), the Gentile churches were wanting to throw-off the authority of the original Desposynic bishops (elders) who were in charge of Christianity and who still taught the Mosaic Law (although not circumcision and the other ceremonial laws as ruled by James in Acts 15). They wanted to distance themselves from the Jewish roots of Christianity because the Romans were at war with the Jews in Judea and regarded all Jewish sects as subversive.

This situation and the emergence of what would later be called "Gnosticism" alarmed Jude and gave rise to the occasion for writing his Epistle. It has not lost its relevance for us today.

[Note: the reader should not interpret the above as a disassociation from the value of the word "literal" nor in the practice of hermeneutics to find the "literal sense" of the Scriptures. Just as the word "science" describes a valid process, but "scientism" does not, so the word "literal" describes a valid value in biblical interpretation, while "literalism" is a unbalanced depreciation of biblical symbolism.]

The Book of Enoch

In referencing Jude, we cannot forget the influence of the Book of Enoch on the writers of the New Testament. Jude, of course, quotes Enoch directly, but his reference to "wandering stars" hearkens back to one of the parables found in Enoch Chapter 89 with the "trial of the stars" (v. 33) which were the "seventy shepherds" who killed the sheep, and upon being found guilty of the crime "were thrust into the flaming abyss." These seventy shepherds, of course, are the Greater Sanhedrin (as identified by John in

Revelation Chapter 12) and supported here in Enoch earlier in a reference to a Lesser Sanhedrin of "twenty-three shepherds" (88:7). (See *Pesher for the Day of St. Joseph*, 2022).

The entire Book of Enoch is an allegory, along the lines of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. Written during the Intertestamental Period and read extensively by the Qumran Community and hence the First Christians, it was never meant to be taken literally - except perhaps the polemics over the sacred calendar (which betrays the anachronism of the internecine religious struggles of the Herodian era) - and it says so:

Enoch, a righteous man [zedek], was with God, answered and spoke, while his eyes were open, and while he saw a holy vision which was in the heavens. This the angel showed me.

- Enoch 1:1

After the book begins with a prelude and references to Sinai, the Watchers, and the Elect (all anachronistic terms which proves that Enoch was written in the Intertestamental Period) - and then the reference quoted by Jude 14-15 "Behold he cometh with ten thousands of his saints . . ." - it follows with a description of the pre-Flood world, the famous account of the fallen angels and their mingling with Earth women, the birth of giants (who grow 450 feet tall!) and the anticipation of Divine judgment for the perversions of the human race.

Chapters 14-37 contain a vision of the "stones of crystal" (which has bearing on our astrological understanding of Revelation 15) and various astronomical observations which form the foundation for the solar calendar followed at Qumran in opposition to the "Babylonian" calendar adhered to by the Jewish Establishment of the Roman/Herodian era.

The Three Great Parables begin in Chapter 38 and follow through probably Chapter 70 [i.e. The Parable of the Secrets of the Righteous (38-44), The Parable of the Ancient of Days (45-55), and The Parable of the Secrets of the Lightnings (56-70). It is not clear when the Third Parable ends but seems to be linked together by the phrase: "In those days."]

The remaining chapters contain various references to parables, visions, mysteries, secret things and astronomical observations. In Chapter 67:1, we now have Noah saying,

After this he [Michael the Archangel] gave me the signs of all the secret things in the book of my great grandfather Enoch, and in the parables which had been given to him; inserting them for me, among the words of the book of parables. (emphasis added)

Thus is strengthened our case that the entire book is an allegory, not without Divine inspiration, but neither of canonical authority as it has come down to us. Enoch is said

to have lived over 500 years (59:1, contrary to the Genesis account). But there might be other editions which do not make this error. Regardless, while we might be able to use Enoch to illustrate or teach doctrine, it cannot be used to *establish* doctrine. And certainly, the profound imagery which antedates the New Testament, when used by the New Testament writers, must be interpreted with a peshet and not literalized as is common to uninformed exegetes.

The Parousia

And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming [parousia], and of the end of the world [eon]?

- Matthew 24:3

Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?

They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith.

- John 16:17-18

[W]e have made known unto you the power and coming [parousia] of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . For he received from God the Father honour and glory . . . which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

- 2 Peter 1:16-18

There is more than one word for "come," "cometh," and "coming" in the original languages of the Bible. Before I knew this as a neophyte theologian in the Pentecostal movement, I sometimes wondered how it was that the disciples in Matthew 24 could even discuss the notion of "the second coming of Christ" (24:3), when they had not even comprehended yet that Jesus was going to leave them? What has become the doctrine of the Ascension of Christ was not even on their radar, as this text from John 16 clearly indicates.

Of course, as future Bible study would reveal, the word "parousia" is sometimes translated in our English Bibles as "coming." All scholars acknowledge that the word carries a dual interpretation to refer to a manifested presence in the present tense or one which is becoming manifested as in a future tense. *Parousia* is not a word which refers to movement as in a spatial progression from point A to point B. Other words in the Bible have this meaning.

Parousia does not appear in our text from Acts 1:11 at the Ascension; a different word is used. It is, indeed, a word which promises a coming of Christ in which He moves from point A (His throne in Heaven) to point B (the clouds in the sky) to where we all can see Him as is alluded to in Revelation 1:7:

Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

But if the notions of His "throne" and the "clouds" are themselves terms which contain symbolic meaning, then the word *parousia* need not be used. In other words, if, as they are used in the Bible, there is no literal throne in Heaven, for example, or the "clouds" are symbolic for the heavenly host and not the puffs of steam floating in the air, then we must entertain the notion of a symbolic "coming."

[*Erchomai* (Strong's # 2064) being the middle voice of *eltho* is used instead of *parousia* but **is used like *parousia* because it is in the middle voice.** We assume Revelation was written in Greek, but maybe not, which must be a separate discussion for another time. But for now, it is enough to know that the Greek is *nuanced* here. And let us not forget that there was just one Roman soldier responsible for piercing the Lord's side with a spear. Clearly John uses poetic license to pluralize the crime to a "**they** also which pierced him."]]

The use of *parousia* in our text from 2 Peter 1:16 declares a "coming" which has already occurred in the Gospel records on the Mt. Transfiguration, *before* Christ's crucifixion, resurrection and ascension. Scholars choose to interpret "parousia" based upon its context, which often becomes an excuse for a selective interpretation to protect a pre-conceived doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ.

The Rapture

Paul's exciting description of the Second Coming of Christ in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 certainly suggests just such a spatial movement on the part of Christ and "those with Him." But again, if we understand the notion of "meeting the Lord in the air" to refer to that of enthronement - as in Ephesians and elsewhere where we wage war against "the power of the air" (2:2) but are "raised up together in heavenly places" (2:6) - we press the language too much to suggest a magician's trick of levitation is what is being described.

Unlike an approaching comet or spaceship which is measured by coordinates of time and distance, Christ assures us that He is already here ("Lo, I am with you always . . ." Matthew 28:20). The doctrine of omnipresence requires that we believe that the "second" coming of Christ is really referring to "the opening of the eyes" so that we might see Him and the reality of His kingdom, just as did St. Stephen, St. Paul and the myriad of death-bed testimonies of Christians through the centuries who have seen Christ coming for their souls.

Whatever the First Christians might have believed about the Second Coming, it is clear that we have misunderstood it or God has changed His mind, a right He has reserved in His own sovereignty (Acts 1:7). The demand for a timetable hazards the very kind of literalism condemned by Jude discussed above, and also gives rise to the "scoffers" condemned by St. Peter who complain, "Where is the promise of his coming?" (2 Peter 3:4).

As for the General Resurrection, Jesus said that it occurs "at the last day." He says this no less than four times in John Chapter Six (6:39, 40, 44, 54); yet when Martha repeats His words back to Him in John 11:24, He ups the ante and declares:

I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. (v. 25-26)

Eschatologically speaking, St. Paul also agrees and tells us that the "last enemy" to be destroyed in the messianic kingdom is physical death itself (1 Corinthians 15:26). It is difficult to understand how there can be a thousand years and another season of apostasy and holy warfare after this so-called "last" enemy has been vanquished.

Unto a Thousand Generations

He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations.

- Psalm 105:8

O ye seed of Israel . . . be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations.

- 1 Chronicles 16:15

The notion that human history is meant to last a thousand generations was a proposition I first heard from David Chilton present at one of his lectures before he died prematurely of a stroke, truly a tragic loss to the Body of Christ. But I had already read it in his books on Bible prophecy when they were first published: *Paradise Restored* (Reconstruction Press, 1985) and *Days of Vengeance* (Dominion Press, 1987). It is not, however, an obscure concept in the Bible. It's iterated and reiterated in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:6; Deuteronomy 5:10), by King David in the texts cited above, and in places like Deuteronomy 7:9:

Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations.

I had always dismissed it as hyperbolic language as many other numerical values in the Bible, such as 7, 12, 40, etc. which have symbolic meanings. While Chilton did not believe it should be taken literally, either, he did insist that the expression "a thousand generations" should be **at least** that long and perhaps representative of a much longer period of time:

*Some might accuse me of falling into an inconsistent "literalism" at this point, taking thousand literally in Deuteronomy but not in Revelation. Not so. I will grant that when God uses the term thousand, he is speaking of vastness rather than a specific number. Having admitted that, however, let's look closer at the way this term is used in symbolism. When God said that He owns the cattle on a thousand hills, He means a vast number of cattle on a vast number of hills - but there are more than 1,000 hills. The Bible promises that God's people will be kings and priests for a thousand years, meaning a vast number of years - but Christians have been kings and priests for more than 1,000 years (almost 2,000 years now). My point is this the term thousand is often used symbolically in Scripture, to express vastness; **but that vastness is, in reality much more than the literal thousand.***

- *Paradise Restored*, p. 221 (emphasis added)

The expression "a thousand generations" is found in the Law and the Prophets from every time period of Old Testament revelation. While we might want to believe its use in the Psalms is symbolic, the fact that it appears in the *preceptive* portions of Old Testament revelation, especially when it is juxtaposed with a converse expression of "the third and fourth generation" in which God promises to limit the propagation of an evil lineage:

And the LORD descended in the cloud . . . and proclaimed the name of the LORD . . . The LORD, The LORD God merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands . . . visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth . . . Exodus 34:5-7 *cf.* Jeremiah 32:18

This is a most remarkable text because "keeping mercy for thousands" is here attached as a permanent attribute of God Himself: **He is the *Thousand Generations God***. It is a part of His name, which means that it is an unchangeable Divine attribute. We are compelled to accept it as a literal expression.

As we have noted elsewhere, God's covenant with Abraham defines a generation numerically as a hundred years (see *The Great Convergence & The Triple Witness*, under Articles of <https://2046AD.org>). Compare Genesis 15:13 with Genesis 15:16. In verse 13 God says "four hundred years," then in verse 16, talking about the same period of captivity in Egypt, He say it will be "four generations."

Doing the math of 100 years times 1000 generations equals 100,000 years. This is a direct correlation and not merely an inference like other calculations for the length of a generation made by theologians such as 40 years or 70 years.

Again, it is tempting to simply dismiss this as a suggestion that God is an infinite being who lives for all of eternity. But that is not what the texts are saying. While the exact term "generation" is absent in some of these texts but clearly implied, in other places, such as our text in Deuteronomy 7:9 cited above, the Hebrew word *dur* (Strong's #1755) appears in the text, a word which does not refer to merely a time period, but to the actual number of sequential begettings.

It must share symmetry with the converse expression of "visiting the iniquity unto the third and fourth generations." If that is to be taken literally, then so must our allusion to the "thousand" begettings of the righteous.

[As a side note: "Visiting the iniquity [lawlessness]" is not meant to be interpreted as a punishment of the children for the sins of the fathers but rather that God will not allow a period of lawlessness to continue beyond four generations before judging the society and bringing the perpetrators to an end.]

The Descendants of Jesus Christ

***I have made a covenant with my chosen . . . Thy seed will I establish for ever,
and build up thy throne to all generations.***

- Psalm 89:3-4

For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday. . . Ps. 90:4

I do not believe God has changed His mind when it comes to His original intention. His original intention in creation was for a long period of human righteousness and a subsequent era of galactic colonization by this Adamite species he created "in his own image." It is a period of a thousand generations, or the equivalence of 100,000 years if we follow the calculations offered us in the Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis 15 cited above. God is sticking to the plan.

In the Soteriological Model, the "consummation of all things" is dependent upon the success of human action: namely, the quest of "discipling the nations" as outlined by Christ in the Great Commission. Most Christians have a myopic interpretation of that commission which involves world evangelism and a general success at building their version of "churchianity." Their truncated understanding of what Christ meant in "teaching" the nations "all things I have commanded you" has left them without a plan for Christian reconstruction and dominion.

This could be precisely what St. Paul was referring to when he said, "that we no longer know Christ after the flesh" (2 Corinthians 5:16). The sentimental aspiration of a reunion with beloved friends and family would have been what motivated the first generation of

Christians, those who knew Jesus as a man. But he was not merely a man. He was a manifestation of the Divine Logos as the 2nd Person of the Trinity according to Christian doctrine. Jesus was aware of this sentimental feeling and reminded His disciples that "another Comforter" would be sent to take His place. We are taught in the New Testament that the work and person of the Holy Spirit provides the sense of personal closeness that we need with Jesus and the comfort we receive from the knowledge of His providential care. We no longer "walk by sight" but "by faith" and rest in the assurance that "we shall behold Him" when our lives on Earth are done.

Hell

***And whosoever was not found written in the book of life
was cast into the lake of fire.***

- Revelation 20:15

John the Revelator's imagery of a "Lake of Fire" is something new in the biblical narrative. The Israelites were not strangers to volcanoes, but a volcano at sea would be an unfamiliar occurrence, which would explain the absence of Old Testament references to such a phenomenon, even though a destruction by fire - either through war or a fiery brimstone from Heaven - is prominent. A sea of lava would be a different kind of symbolism.

It is helpful to know the ancient legends of the formation of the Patmos Island and of surrounding islands in the Aegean Sea. The ancients claim that they were formed from a "sea of fire" produced from underwater volcanic action. It might be that John drew from these local tales during his exile to envision the concept of total destruction from such a sea of lava. Just as Jesus drew His description of *Gehenna* from the Valley of Hinnom - a remote gorge just outside the city of Jerusalem where trash and debris were continuously burned ("where the fire is not quenched") and carrion was always rotting ("where the worm dieth not") - so "hell" is portrayed as God's eternal landfill.

Of course, as noted elsewhere, Isaac Newton, as did many Historicists of his era, regarded the "Lake of Fire" as a symbol in the life of nations as a total destruction from war. The entire scenario is not meant to be a description of one's eternal destiny on a personal level, but only the suffering of personal consequences which arise from the deadly effects of war upon a population.

In other words, if one has accepted citizenship in the antichrist kingdom described in Revelation by receiving "the mark of the Beast," you will be destroyed along with destruction of that antichrist nation-state.

In spite of this, we are told that even "death and hell" are cast into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:14), which we might interpret to mean that the time will come when the purging action of these two institutions will no longer be needed in God's Kingdom.

2046 AD and the Solar Nova

That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

- Jesus, Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:45

Since we do not believe that God governs His creation arbitrarily, but rather administers the "blessings and cursings" - the sanctions - according to the human response to His covenants, we can surmise that whatever the First Christians believed about the Second Coming of Christ, God has postponed it in order to achieve His created purpose for mankind.

What we call "the Great Eschaton" would, then, not be the Second Coming of Christ, but perhaps the greatest judgment in history in which the works of man "melt with a fervant heat" in which only a righteous remnant survive.

This is a challenging scenario. If the geological record shows evidence of solar novae and extinction level events which occur every 12,000 years, how is it possible for Christ's glorious kingdom to continue for 100,000 years? If that timeline is true, then there could be another eight or ten nova catastrophes which interrupt and perhaps derail this "thousand generation" time period.

This was a personal challenge to me because it suggested seasons of disaster which seem to contradict the notion of a perfect creation as declared by the Creator in Genesis 1. These would be events hard-wired into the universe and would be cycles progressing independently and irrespective of a "fall of man," the notion of Original Sin, and Atonement, etc. Can these be reconciled?

A full discussion must be saved for a future Peshier, but the short answer would say that all of creation have seasons of summer and winter - geophysically and astrophysically. "God sends his rain upon the just and the unjust." Seasons are not the result of the fall of Adam, for provision for them was created from the start, in the creation of "day" and "night" and the "signs" and "seasons":

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

- Genesis 1:14

Astronomical cycles were created before the fall of man and are a part of God's eternal activity of creation. He continuously recycles them, as alluded to by the Apostle as he quotes from Psalm 102:

And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish but thou

remainest; and they shall all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

- Hebrews 1:10-11

Notice that this condition of waxing and waning was created "in the beginning" and is inherent to what is meant by "the foundation of the earth."

Yet, man has a separate destiny which transcends the natural cycles, as the Psalmist declares immediately following (but not reiterated by the Apostle in Hebrews):

The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee. (102:28)

A righteous species armed with an advanced technology and foreknowledge need not be threatened or even challenged by a solar nova and a subsequent ice age. For thousands of years, mankind feared the winter months until our species learned how to keep food in storage, constructed shelters, and then found sources of energy to burn for warmth. A solar nova event with an ice age requires more advanced planning, but need not be the daunting threat it is now.

The Feast of the Seven Trumpets

Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb . . .
Revelation 19:9

***Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;
That ye may eat the flesh of kings . . .*** Revelation 19:17, 18

The Feast of the Seven Trumpets is not the Feast of Tabernacles (Succoth); it is the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

As discussed elsewhere, Isaac Newton helps us interpret these verses in Revelation. The *peshet* for "eating flesh" (as it refers to the life of nations) would mean the seizing of colonial assets, as Newton interprets Revelation 17:16:

[T]he flesh [is put] for riches and possessions (Newton, *Observations*, p. 7).

"Burning with fire" would mean destroying the power base in a politically destructive immolation. This would be the *peshet* or as Newton would say,

[B]urning any thing with fire, is put for the consuming thereof by war; a conflagration of the earth, or turning a country into a lake of fire, for the consumption of a kingdom by war. p. 6

On Blowing Trumpets

The statutes in the Mosaic Law which govern the blowing of trumpets are found in Numbers Chapter 10. There are different kinds. Some trumpet sounds are for the calling of the people to a sacred assembly; others to celebration; yet others, to war:

And if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets, and ye shall be remembered before the LORD your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies.

- v. 9

Blowing the trumpets occurs at the first day of each month and at the time of sacrifices, v. 10. And presumably at the sabbath gatherings of the people in synagogue:

They have burned up all the synagogues of God in the land. Psalm 74:8.

The word "synagogue" here is "mo'ed" which is the word for trumpet (Strong's #4130). Thus, it could be translated, "They have burned up all the trumpets of God in the land." It would suggest that the enemies of Israel have deprived its leaders of the means to call the people to an assembly as a civil body politic, for worship, war, or to perform a judicial function. Consequently, the inability to summon the nation is equivalent to the destruction of the nation.

The Book of Revelation has seven angels which blow seven trumpets. This corresponds to the Old Testament accounts of the seven priests which blew the seven trumpets to announce the procession of the Ark of the Covenant (Joshua 6, *et al*) as a formal declaration that the Israelite invasion of the land of Canaan had commenced.

There is no compelling reason that we should believe that these angels are supernatural beings except as a "vision" John may have seen a heavenly representation of the earthly reality. The six trumpets announce a progression of Divine judgment which ends in Revelation 9 but in Revelation 10 the trumpet is called a "voice:"

But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished as he hath declared to his servants the prophets. (10:7).

We suspect that this trumpet which is sounded over a period of "days" (years?) and closes the "mystery of God" should correspond to the "last trump" as enunciated by the Apostles which accompanies the "parousia": 1 Corinthians 15:52 and the resurrection which is associated with the "gathering" declared by Jesus: Matthew 24:31. This "gathering together of the saints" is called a "resurrection" (1 Thessalonians 4:16).

And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever (Revelation 11:15).

Again, while we believe in a future physical resurrection as declared by Jesus in places such as John 6 and elsewhere, the concept of a "resurrection" is one which is applied to the life of nations, as it is of individuals. In Ezekiel's Vision of the Dry Bones (Chapter 37), while an exciting and inspirational vision for the hope of personal salvation, the text clearly indicates that what is being described is a regathering of the people of Israel which constitutes a "resurrection" of the *civil body politic*:

Then he said unto me Son of man these bones are the whole house of Israel, behold they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts . . . I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. 37:11-12

Likewise, in the judicial ruling by James in Acts 15 to bring the Gentiles into the Messianic coverture, he quotes Amos and describes as a resurrection the "raising up" of the "tabernacle of David" in the regal dominion of Jesus Christ and His Desposynic viceroys, as says Methodius:

For the term "resurrection" is not applied to that which has not fallen, but, to that which has fallen and rises again; as when the prophet says, "I will also raise up again the tabernacle of David which has fallen down." (Amos 9:11 cf. Acts 15 :16)

Chilton and others try to make the Seventh Trumpet as the one which announces the 1st of the Seventh Month (Tishri) (Leviticus 23:24; Numbers 29:1, et al), but all sabbaths were holy convocations which were announced by trumpets. Consequently, the seventh trumpet should correspond to the end of the Ingathering Period, which ends on the "eighth day of Succoth" which was the final sabbath of the feast which began on the first day of the month and ended on the fifteenth day of the month.

We suggest that this final Trumpet occurs on the final day of Succoth which becomes, in Bible prophecy, the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. Just as the wanderings of Israel and their dwelling in booths (succoth) ended upon the crossing of the Jordan and the invasion of Palestine, so also, eschatologically speaking, the Ingathering of the Gospel Age ends with the seizing of the antichrist kingdoms of the earth by the saints, as delineated by Daniel and John the Revelator.

The Feast of the Seven Trumpets is not the 1st Day of Tishri, Yom Kippur, Succoth, nor merely a harvest festival or Thanksgiving. It commemorates the "Day of the LORD," an event which has not yet occurred.

In conclusion, this very publication, *The Cambrian Peshier*, is described as "a **Voice** of the Desposyni to the Dispersion." It is the sounding of a trumpet for the gathering of the saints. More another time.

A Servant of Jesus,

James Stivers

Collect for the Day:

We have no ***Collect for the Day***, except to offer the proclamation of the "four and twenty elders" (Revelation 11:17-18):

We give thee thanks O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints and them that fear thy name small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. Amen.

***Footnote to title: "Vulgaris" refers to the common era dating of Christ's birth from 3 BC, hence 100,000 A.D. would be 99,997 C.E.**

**Cambrian Peshier* is the pastoral epistle of the Cambrian Episcopal Church of the Grail, a fellowship and abbey adhering to a spiritual tradition from ancient Wales. We use the Authorized Version of the Bible (King James Version) as our default translation and the Book of Common Prayer of the Episcopalian Church for liturgical guidance. We are not an affiliate of any denomination.

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